



# Wave 4 Satisfaction Survey Results

## February 22, 2005

Submitted to:  
Grants.gov Program Management Office

Submitted by:  
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## Background and Methodology

- The purpose of the research is to measure users' satisfaction with the Grants.gov system and to assess the perceived value to their organizations.
- A ten-minute online survey (Wave 4) was administered in late January–early February 2005 to Grant Community members and grant making agency representatives (Grantors) who visited Grants.gov in the prior two months.
- The survey covered the following areas:
  - Overall satisfaction with Grants.gov
  - Satisfaction with Grants.gov attributes (e.g., navigation, look and feel, and content)
  - Usage of and satisfaction with customer support
  - Evaluation of Grants.gov compared to current grant processes
  - Organizational demographics
- For Grant Community members, Wave 4 results of the Satisfaction Survey were compared to Wave 3 conducted in October 2004, Wave 2 conducted in late July–early August 2004, and Wave 1 done in April 2004. For Grantors, Wave 4 results were compared to Wave 2 and Wave 1. Grantors were not included in Wave 3 because, in total, there were too few in number to survey.

## Background & Methodology (continued)

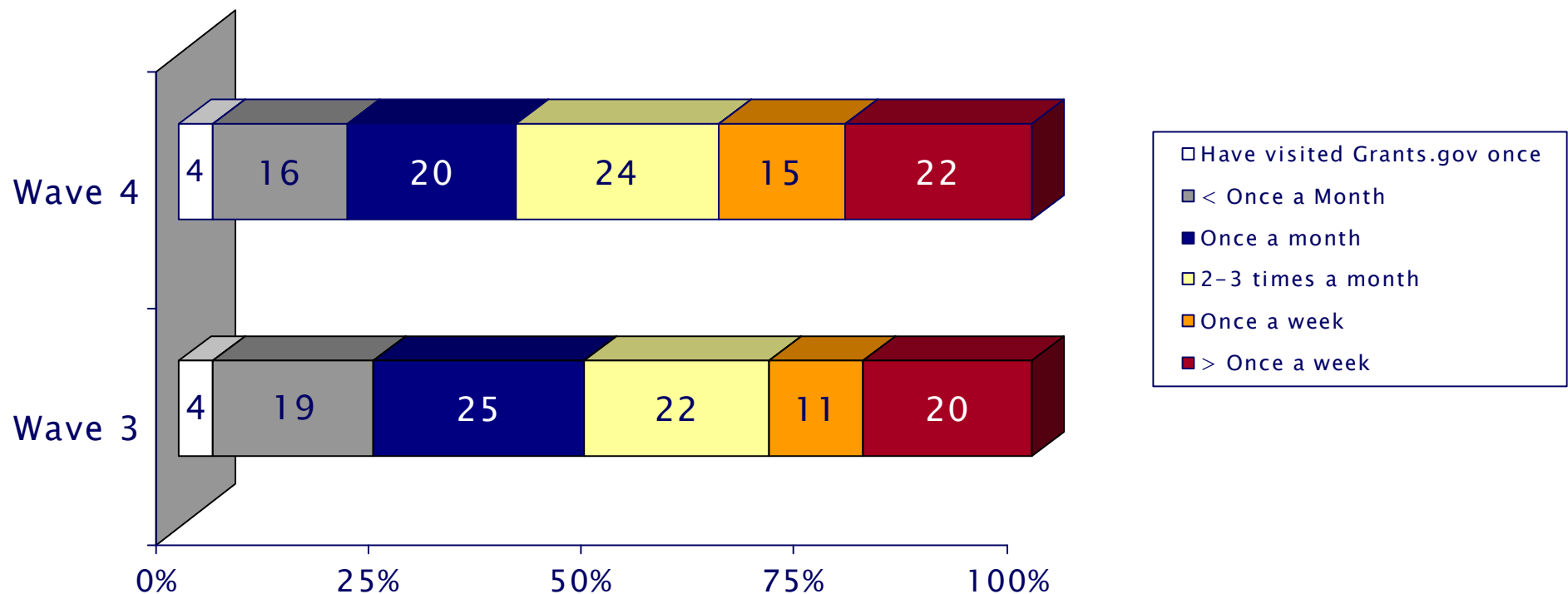
- A total of 179 online surveys were completed with Grant Community members and 68 with Grantors.
- *As with all quantitative market research, every sample has a margin of error, or confidence interval. For example, if 50% of respondents have answered yes to a particular question and the confidence interval is  $\pm 5\%$ , it is statistically reliable to state that 45–55% of people in the identified demographic group would also say yes to the same question. Confidence intervals are 95% accurate, which is the standard confidence level in the market research industry.*
  - *For the Wave 4 Grant Community sample size of 179, the 95% confidence interval is  $\pm 7\%$*
  - *For the Wave 4 Grantor sample size of 68, the 95% confidence interval is  $\pm 11\%$*
- *It is possible to make inferences from these findings, particularly if thresholds for making decisions fall within the confidence interval. For example, if an action should be taken if at least 33% answer a question in a certain way, and 40% of the Grant Community respond in that manner, action would be recommended; this is because it is highly unlikely a false conclusion would be made as a result of “sampling error.”*
- *Significant differences between Wave 4 and the previous waves are noted in graphics with a (W3) for Wave 3, (W2) for Wave 2, and (W1) for Wave 1.*

		Sample Size	Margin of Error
Grant Community	Wave 4	179	$\pm 7\%$
	Wave 3	188	$\pm 7\%$
	Wave 2	279	$\pm 6\%$
	Wave 1	190	$\pm 7\%$
Grantors	Wave 4	68	$\pm 11\%$
	Wave 2	59	$\pm 12\%$
	Wave 1	69	$\pm 11\%$

## Frequency of Visits to Grants.gov: Grant Community

- The majority of Grant Community members visit Grants.gov at least once a month, with more than a third using the site once a week or more.
- The frequency of visits has not changed much since Wave 3.

Frequency of Visits to Grants.gov \*

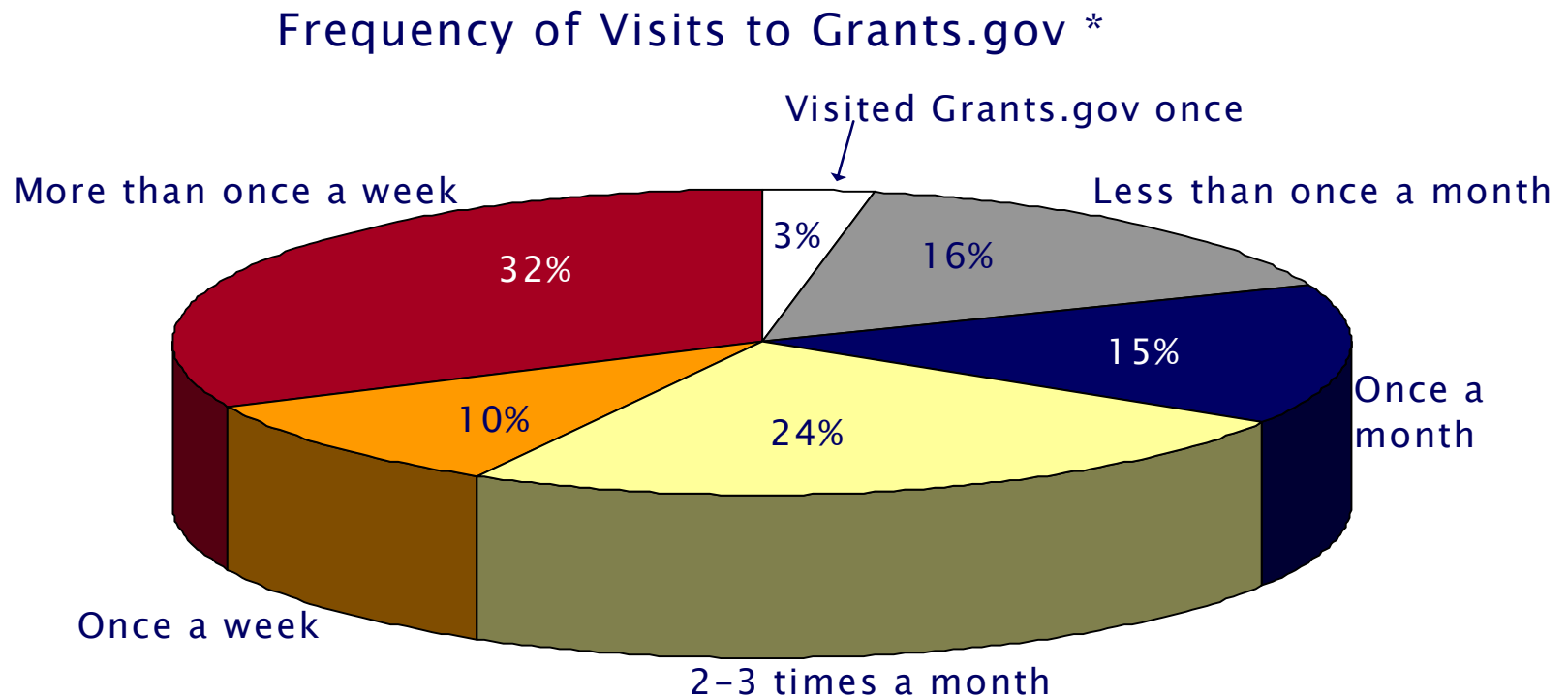


\* New question in Wave 3

Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

## Frequency of Visits to Grants.gov: Grantors

- Grantors also visit Grants.gov frequently, with eight-in-ten using the site at least once a month, and four-in-ten visiting once a week or more.



\* New question in Wave 4

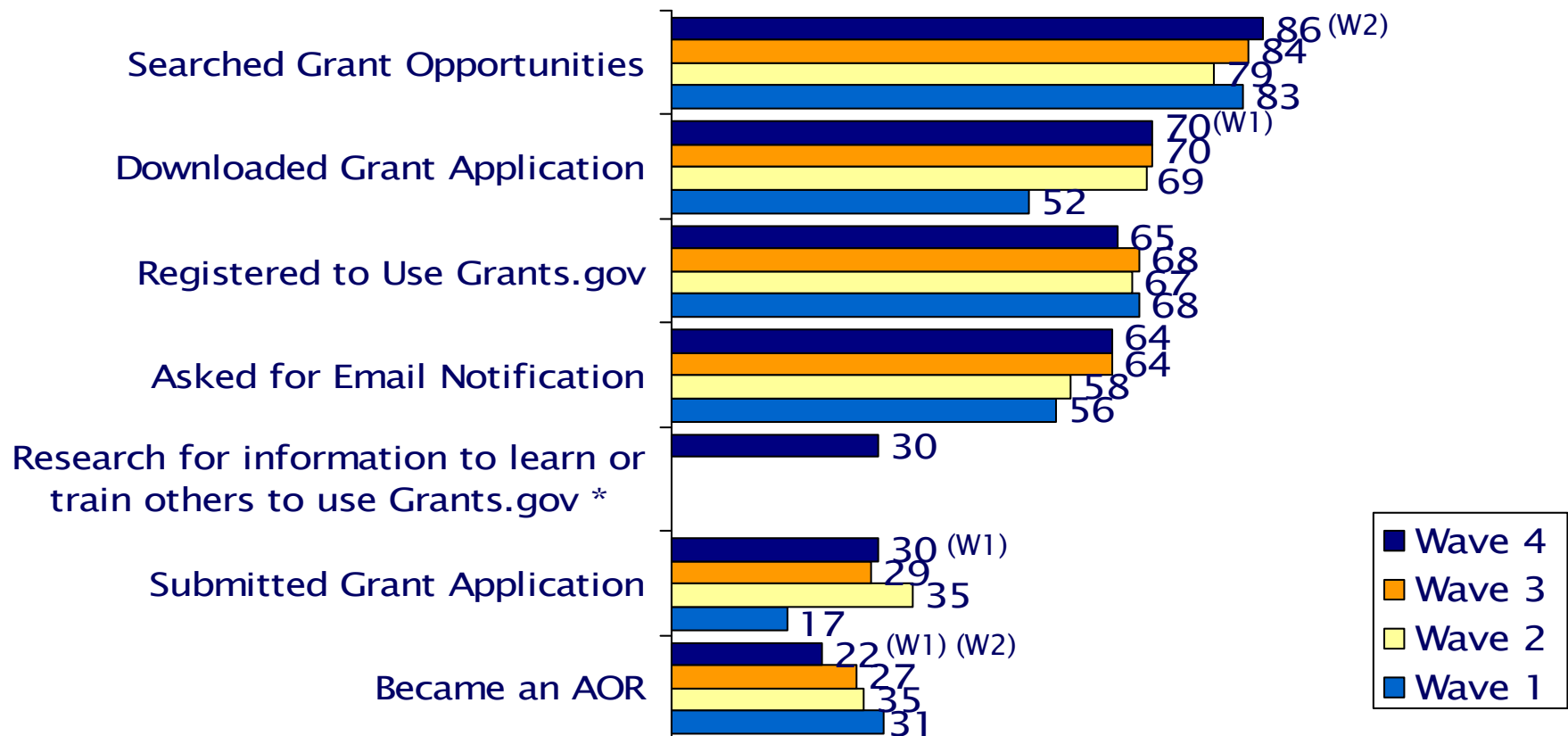
Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

## Profile of Grant Community

- Activity on Grants.gov remains high in many areas. Most Grant Community members have searched for opportunities, downloaded applications, registered to use Grants.gov, and asked for an email notification of opportunities.
- Compared to previous waves, Grant Community members are more likely to search for grant opportunities and download and submit applications. They are less likely to become an AOR.

### Grant Community Activities

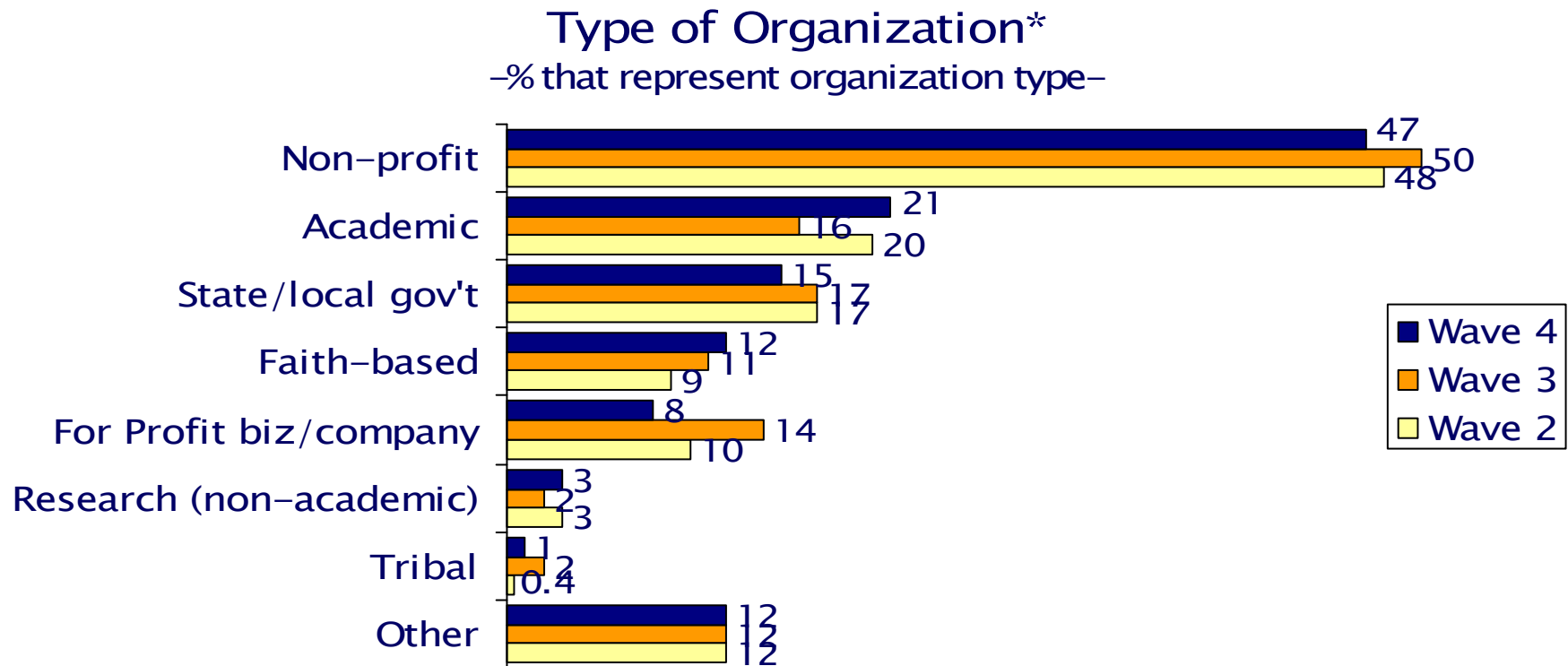
–% that indicate completing activity–



\* New question in Wave 4

## Profile of Grant Community (continued)

- The most common type of organization represented in the Grant Community continues to be non-profits. There are also a number a academic institutions, state and local governments, and faith-based organizations.
- Grant Community members hold a variety of roles within their organization, including Grant Coordinator, Project Coordinator/Manager/Director, Researcher, Grant Writer, Executive Director, and President/CEO. Some are also outside consultants for the grants process.

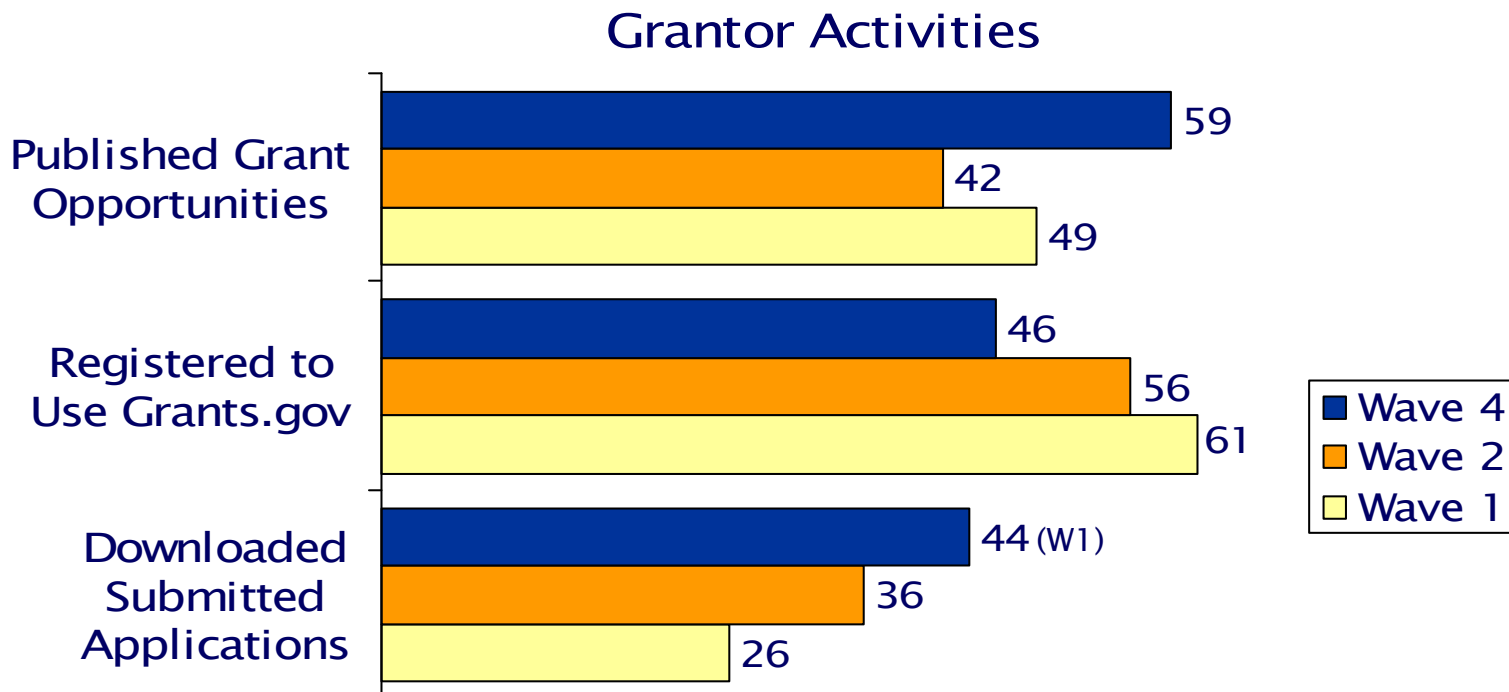


\* New question in Wave 2



## Profile of Grantors

- More than half of Grantors have published grant opportunities on Grants.gov, and more than four-in-ten have registered to use the site and downloaded submitted applications.
- Significantly more Grantors have downloaded submitted applications in Wave 4 than a year ago.
- Grantor roles include Grant Program Manager/Analyst, Grants Officer, IT/Web Content/Systems Developer, Policy Analyst, Contract Specialist, or Administrator.



## Executive Summary and Implications

- Overall satisfaction with Grants.gov continues to increase among the Grant Community. Grantors' satisfaction also improved since the previous wave.
  - A strong majority of both groups also feels that Grants.gov meets or exceeds their expectations, and this has increased over the past year.
- Six-in-ten Grant Community members and 44% of Grantors feel the grant application process is better with Grants.gov, and this has not changed much over time.
- Six-in-ten Grant Community members prefer Grants.gov to their original grant application process, which is down from previous waves. Half (53%) of Grantors prefer Grants.gov, which is higher than previous waves.
- Grant Community satisfaction with site functionality has remained steady over the past year, while most aspects of account set-up and access continue to be a challenge. In terms of grant functionality, the Grant Community finds it easier to find, apply, and submit applications on Grants.gov than a year ago. More are also satisfied with the account status page.
- The Grant Community believes there is room for Grants.gov to continue to improve. Key improvement areas include the following:
  - Making it easier to apply for grant opportunities and submit applications
  - Improving the AOR registration process
  - Making it easier to search on the site

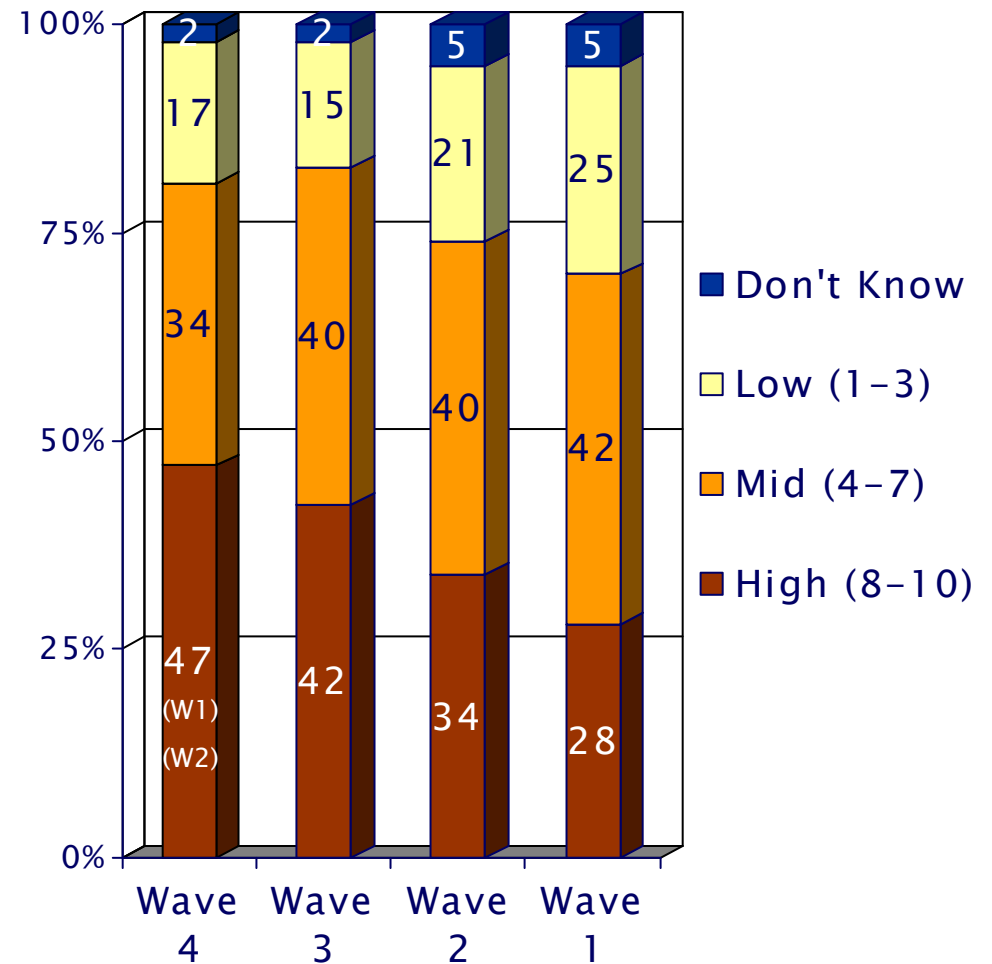
## Executive Summary and Implications

- Grantors' satisfaction with site functionality has increased over the past year in key areas including security of information, reliability, and page downloading speeds. Grantor functionality satisfaction is up in all areas, most significantly in being easier to post opportunities, having flexible roles and agency profiles, and being easier to download completed applications.
- Priorities for improvement for Grantors focus on usability issues, including the following:
  - Making it easier to search the site
  - Being more convenient than other methods
- The Grant Community's satisfaction with customer support has decreased slightly since Wave 3 with 51% at least moderately satisfied. Grantors' satisfaction remains steady at 63% who are moderately/highly satisfied.
- The Grant Community used the FAQs, called, or referred to the user guide most to address their problems or questions in Wave 4. Grantors tended to call, use the FAQs, or email to answer their questions.
- The customer support staff that interacts with users by phone or email is praised by both the Grant Community and Grantors for their professionalism. However, priorities for improvement to increase satisfaction include the accuracy in answers, responsiveness, and overall quality of customer support.

## Overall Satisfaction: Grant Community

- Overall satisfaction among Grant Community members has steadily increased over the past year.
- Currently, almost half are highly satisfied, while another third are moderately satisfied.

### Overall Satisfaction with Grants.gov



## Reasons for Satisfaction Ratings: Grant Community

- Grant Community members are happy with Grants.gov because they find it easy to use, and it has the information they need. Grant Community members also praise customer support.
- Those who are less satisfied are unhappy that Grants.gov does not have grant opportunities available for individuals or particular groups of interest. Some also have usability issues with the site, or problems with customer support.

### Reasons for Satisfaction:

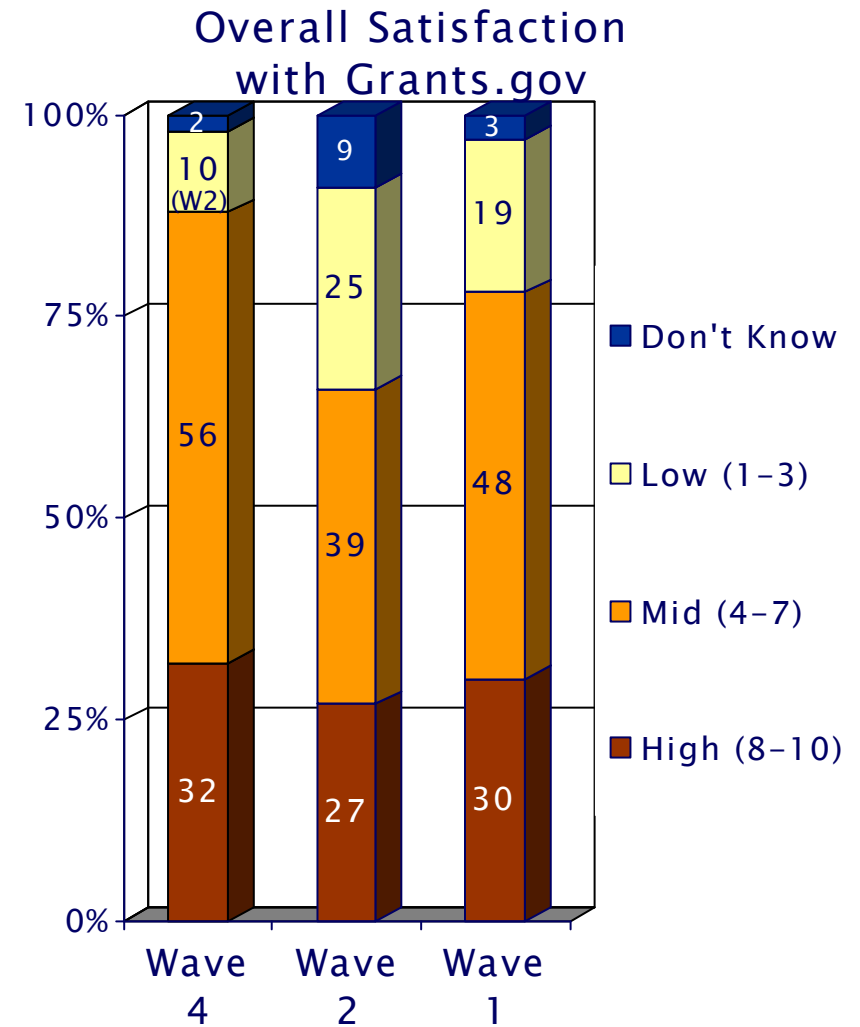
- User-friendly
- Contains all of the needed information
- Easy to navigate the site
- Applying electronically is easy and convenient
- Prompt and informative customer service
- Clear directions/instructions on how to use
- Central location or place to find grants

### Reasons for Dissatisfaction:

- No grant opportunities for individuals or certain groups
- Application process is difficult
- Registration process is difficult
- Website is inefficient due to its disorganization
- Customer service is impolite and slow
- No way to know if something is entered incorrectly until the submission fails without explanation
- Instruction are not clear and seem to go in circles
- Searching for grants is difficult and time consuming
- Links often do not work
- Problems with Macs downloading needed software

## Overall Satisfaction: Grantors

- Overall, a third of Grantors are highly satisfied with Grants.gov, and another 56% are moderately satisfied.
- Grantors' satisfaction with the site has increased since Wave 2, while dissatisfaction has dropped significantly.



## Reasons for Satisfaction Ratings: Grantors

- Grantors are satisfied with the site because it provides a single source for grant information, is improving, and is user friendly.
- However, some Grantors have trouble using Grants.gov and problems downloading grant submissions.

### Reasons for Satisfaction:

- Centralized information
- Steadily improving
- Easy to use
- Good resource

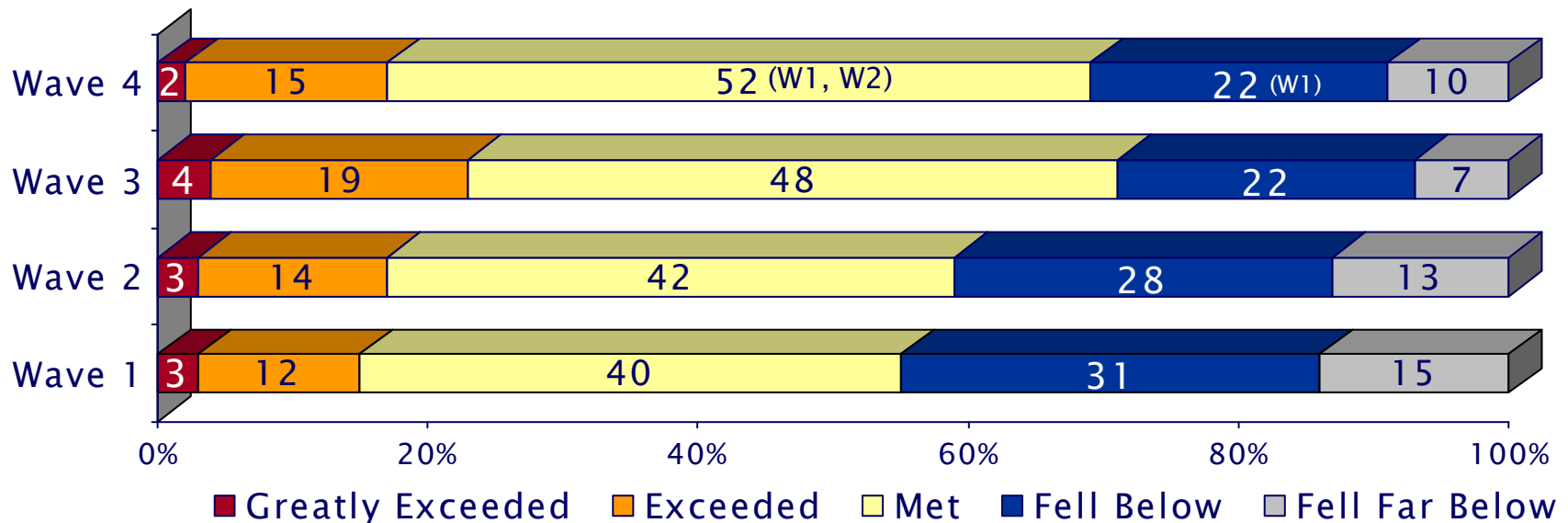
### Reasons for Dissatisfaction:

- Not user-friendly
- Instructions are not clear
- Difficult to navigate
- Problems with downloading

## Living Up to Expectations: Grant Community

- Seven-in-ten Grant Community members believe Grants.gov meets or exceeds their expectations, and this is significantly higher than a year ago.
  - Grant Community members feel the site meets or exceeds their expectations because there is a large amount of information and grant opportunities on the site, all the information they need is on one site, and it is easier to use than other similar sites. However, some expect continued improvements in functionality and capabilities of the site over time.
- Slightly less than a third claim the site falls below their expectations.
  - Grant Community members who believe that Grants.gov is not meeting their expectations are unhappy with Grants.gov because it does not address the funding needs of individuals or certain groups of people, it is not as well designed as other similar sites like NSF, USDA, egrants.gov, and FedGrants, and the email updates are too general.

### Extent to which Grants.gov Met Expectations

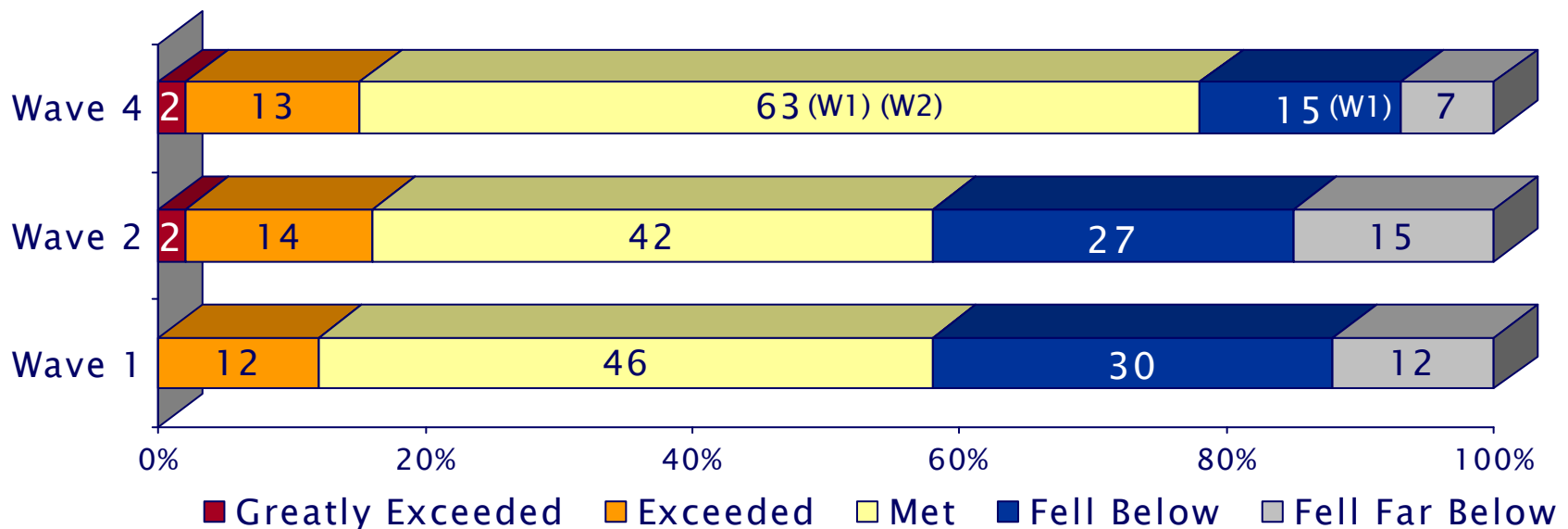




## Living Up to Expectations: Grantors

- More than three-quarters of Grantors believe that Grants.gov meets or exceeds their expectations, and this has increased over the past year.
  - Grantors' feel the system meets or exceeds their expectations because Grants.gov has made more progress than they expected, it is easy to navigate and is user-friendly, and the process is easier than expected. However, Grantors expect to see continued improvements over time.
- Two-in-ten claim the site falls below their expectations.
  - Grantors who believe that Grants.gov is not meeting their expectations believe the site is hard to navigate, not well organized, unclear and confusing.

### Extent to which Grants.gov Met Expectations



# Strengths and Challenges:

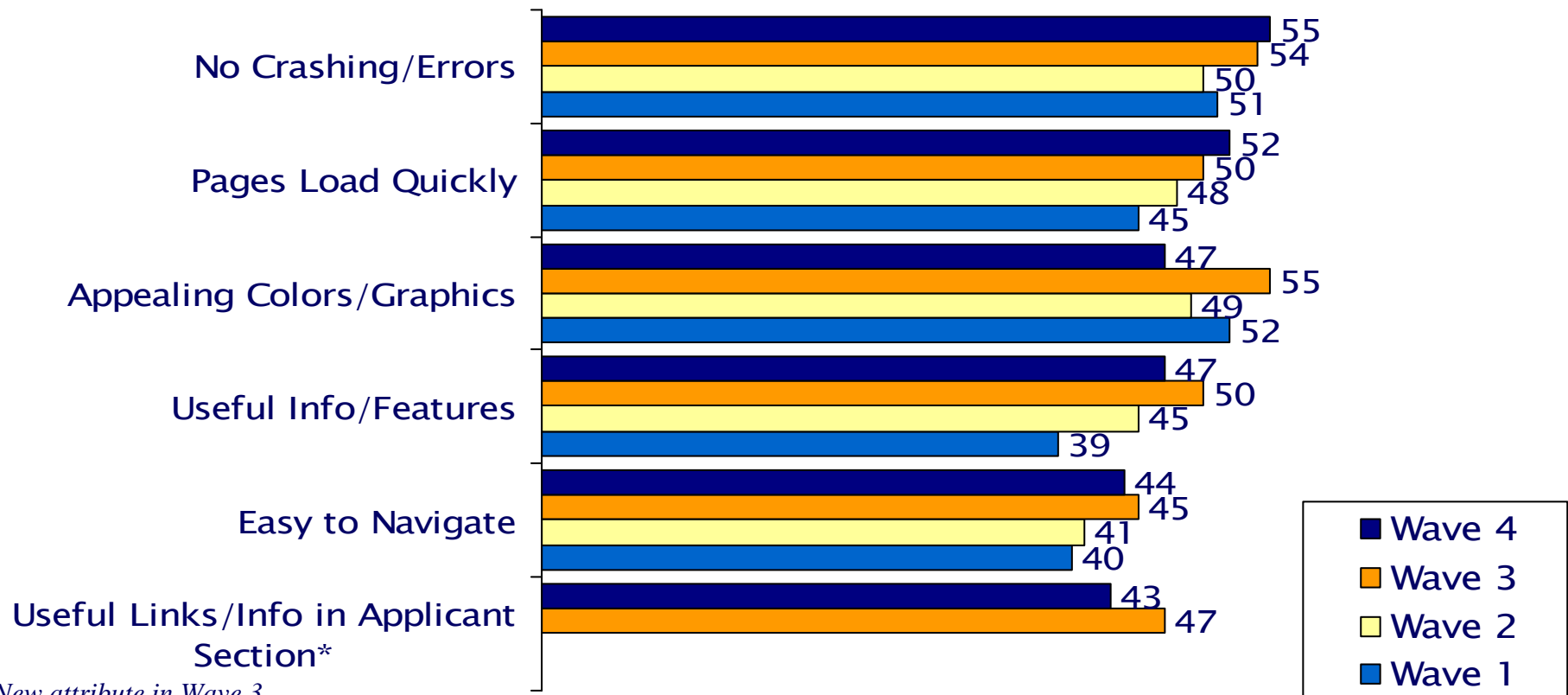
## Grant Community

## Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality (Grant Community)

- Grant Community members' feelings on site functionality have not changed much in the last year.
- About half of Grant Community members continue to find Grants.gov to be a stable and efficient system, due to no errors/system crashes and quick page loading.
- Many also agree that Grants.gov has appealing colors/graphics, is easy to navigate, has useful information and features and a useful Applicant section.

### Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality

– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –

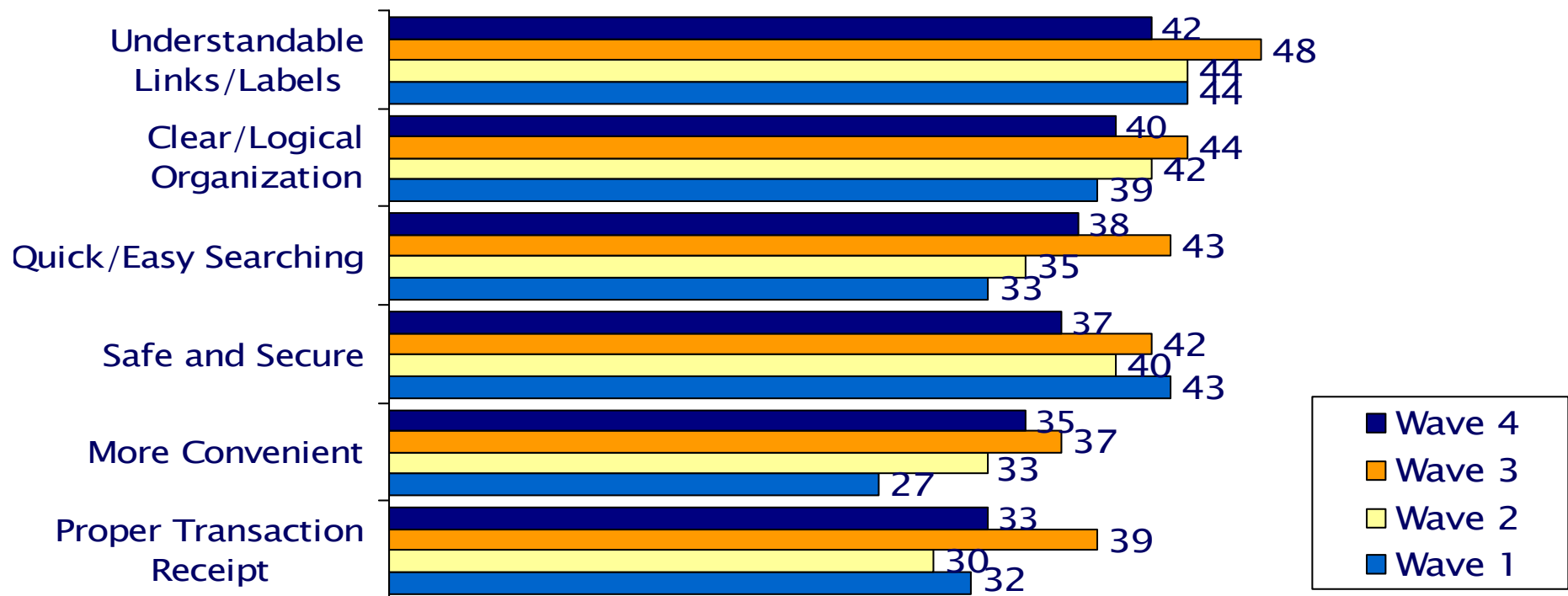


## Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality (continued)

- Some also feel that the site is intuitive and easy to use, as well as being safe and secure for doing business.
- About a third find the site is more convenient than using other methods and provides a proper transaction receipt.

### Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality (cont.)

– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –

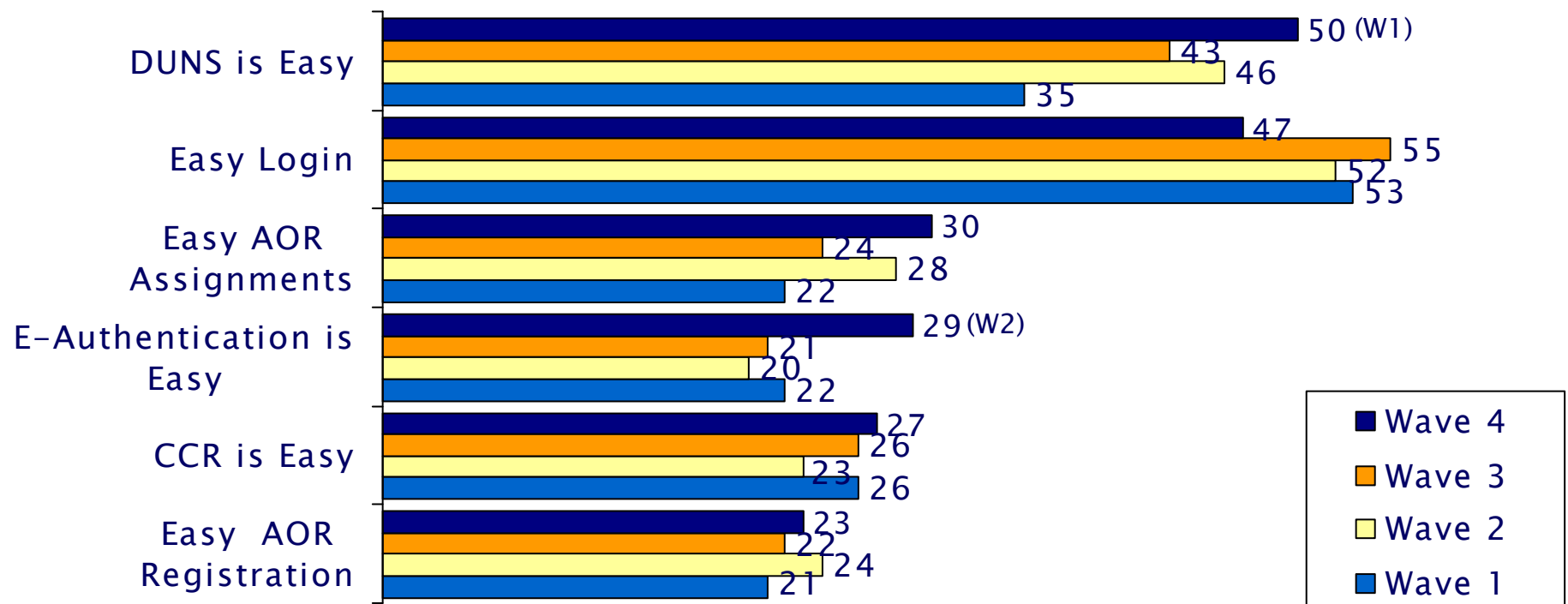


## Strengths and Challenges: Account Set-up and Access (Grant Community)

- Half of Grant Community members find the processes of getting a DUNS number and logging in to Grants.gov easy to conduct.
- However, the other aspects of account set-up and access remain a challenge for most of the Grant Community.
- Two aspects of the process have improved for the Grant Community since previous waves: getting a DUNS number and e-authentication.

### Strengths and Challenges: Account Set-up and Access

– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –

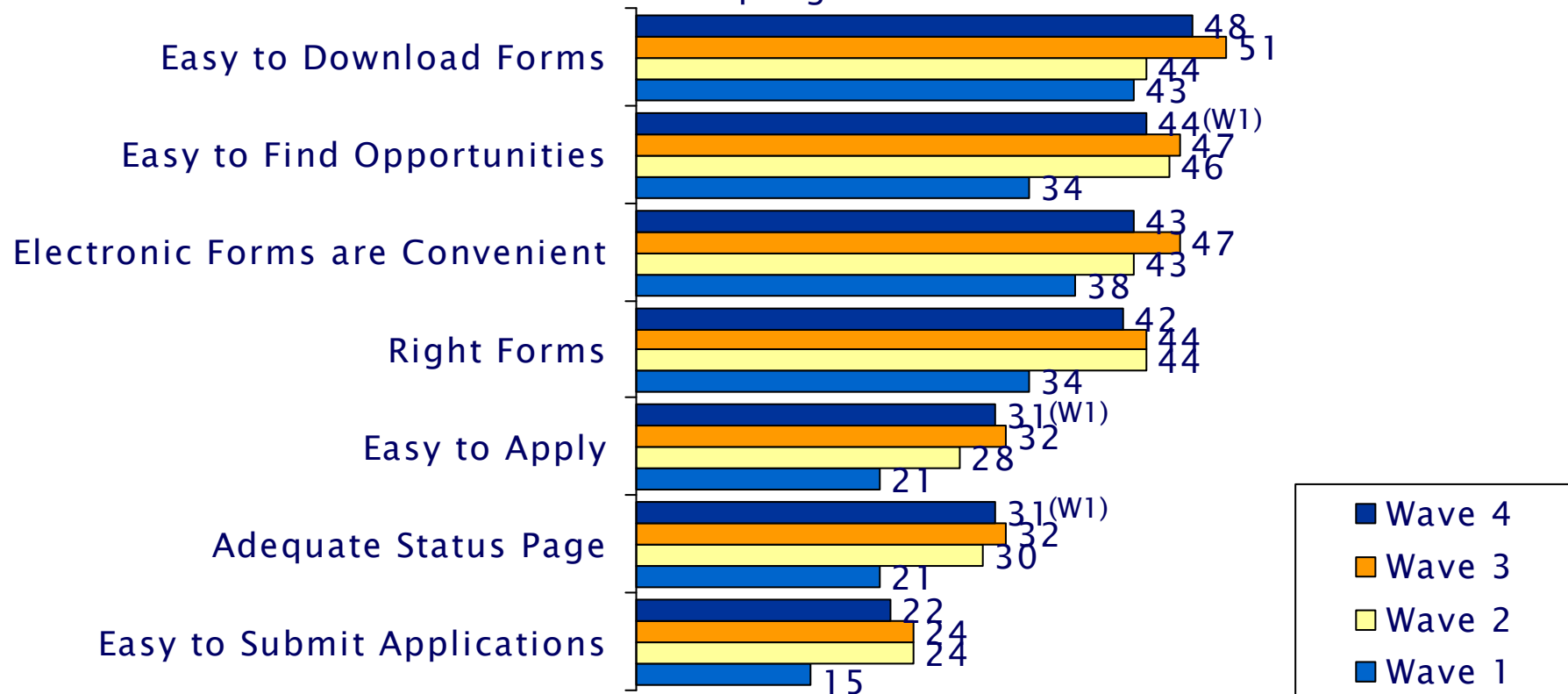


## Strengths and Challenges: Grant Functionality (Grant Community)

- Grants.gov is most successful in making it easy to download the needed forms and to find grant opportunities on the site, as well as making it convenient to get the electronic forms and having the right forms available.
- Compared to a year ago, Grant Community members find it easier to find and apply for grant opportunities on the site. More also feel the site has an adequate status page.
- Other grant functionalities have remained steady over the past year.

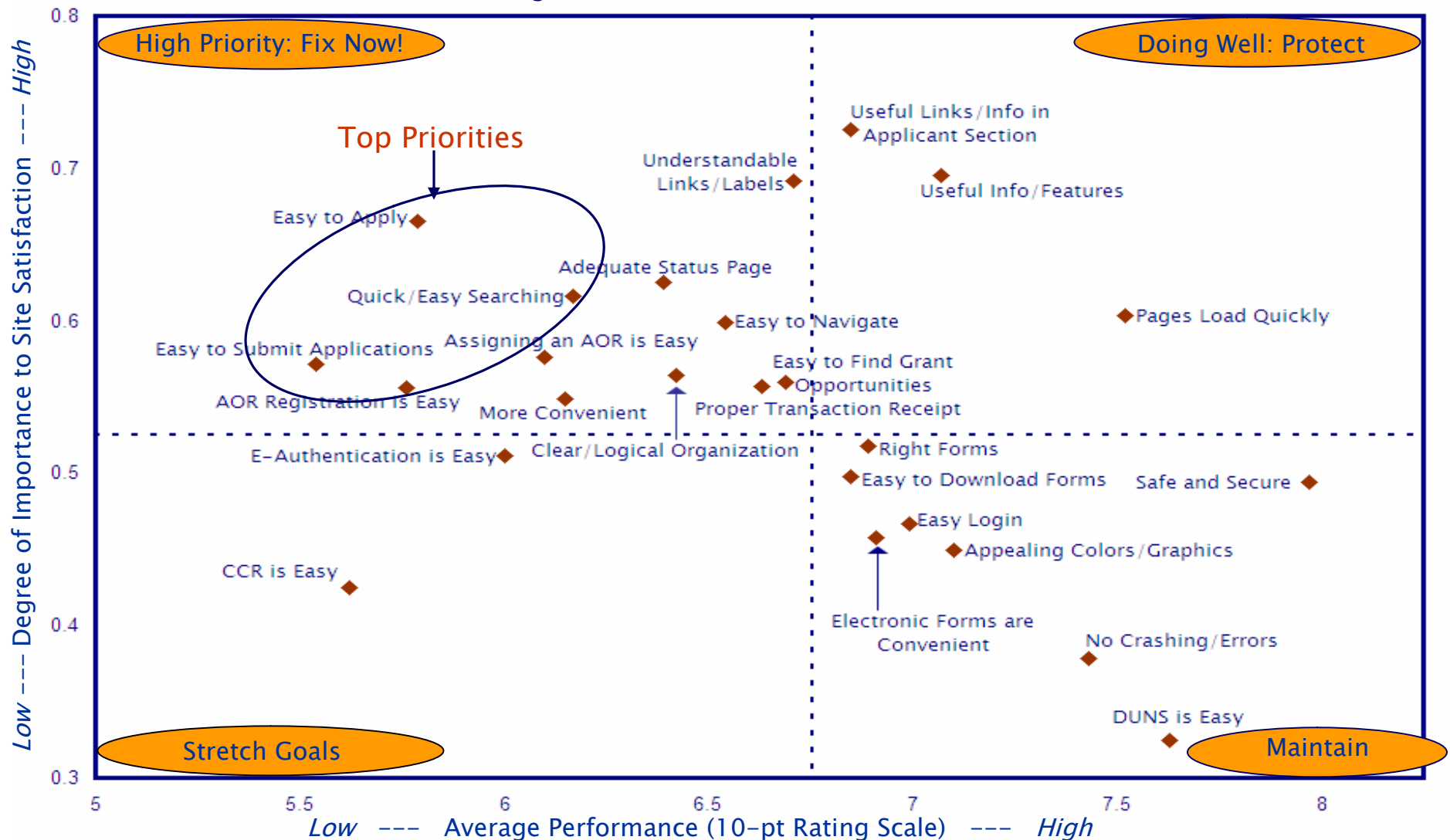
### Strengths and Challenges: Grant Functionality

– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –



## Grant Community Perceptions of Performance

- The graph below considers the individual areas of performance relative to overall satisfaction and helps to prioritize areas that need more attention.
- Areas to continue to improve (see upper left corner) include making it easier to apply, submit applications, conduct searches on the site, and register as an AOR.



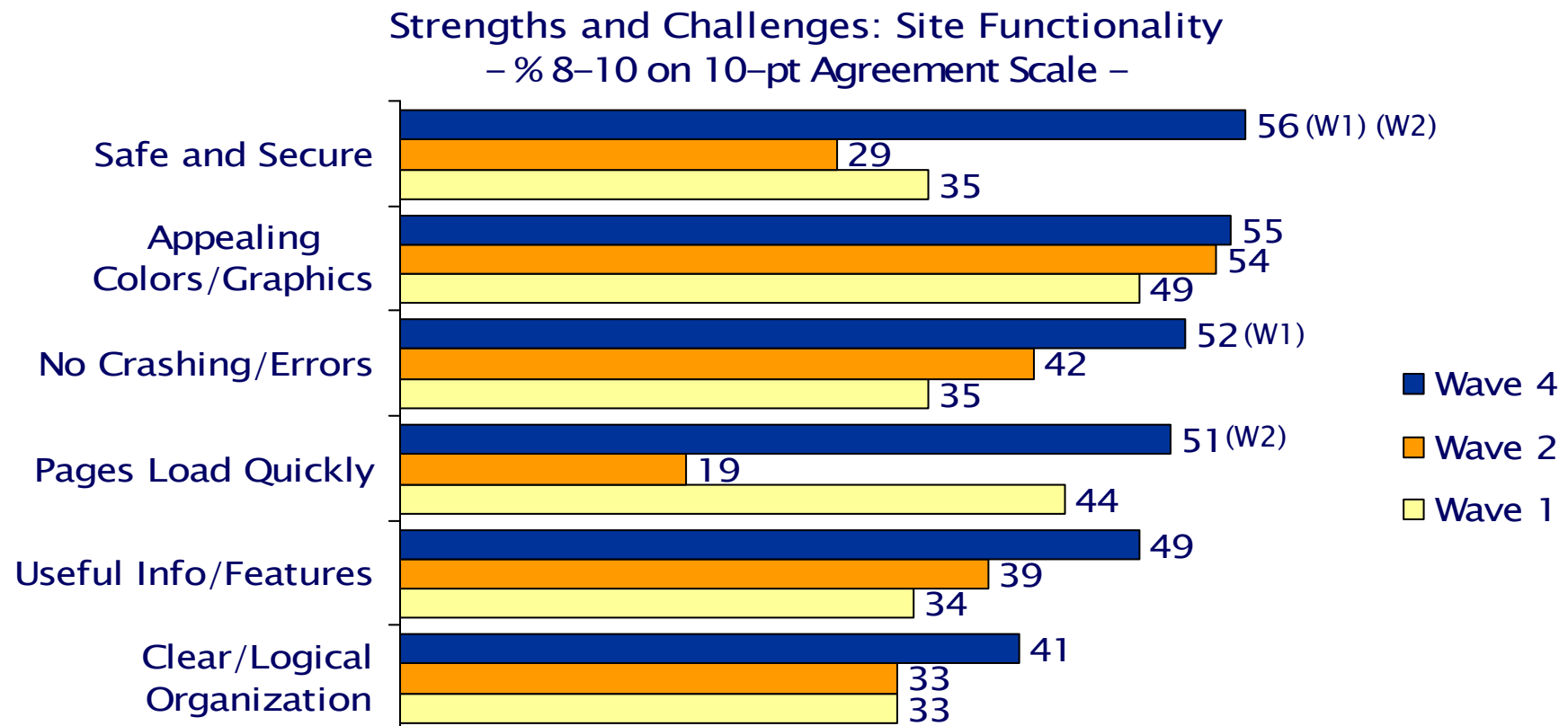
# Strengths and Challenges:

## Grantors



## Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality Grantors

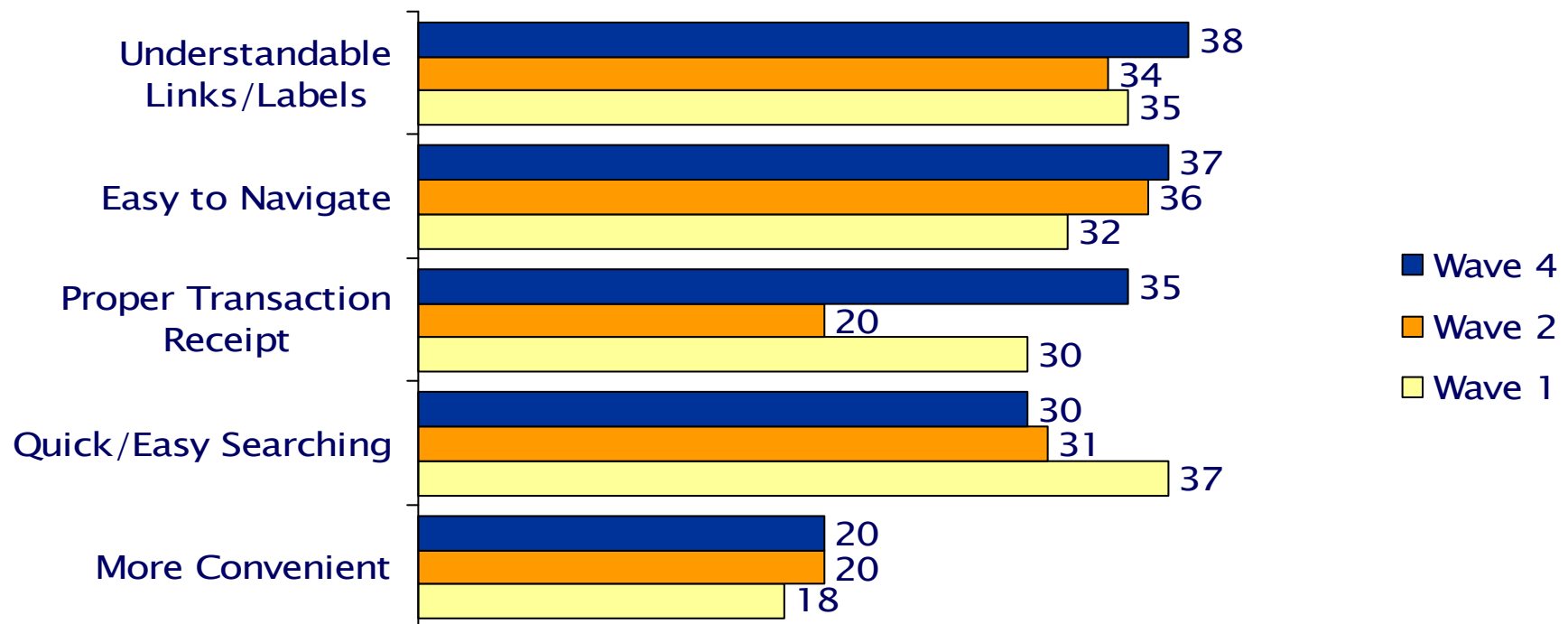
- In Wave 4, half of Grantors are highly satisfied with the security of their information, colors and graphics, reliability, page downloading speed, and usefulness of the information and features.
- Many aspects of site functionality have improved for Grantors this wave. They are more satisfied with the security, reliability of the site, and speed of page downloads than in previous waves.



## Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality Grantors (continued)

- Grantors are less satisfied with the organizational aspects of the site that affect usability, and this has not changed much over the past year.

Strengths and Challenges: Site Functionality (cont.)  
– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –



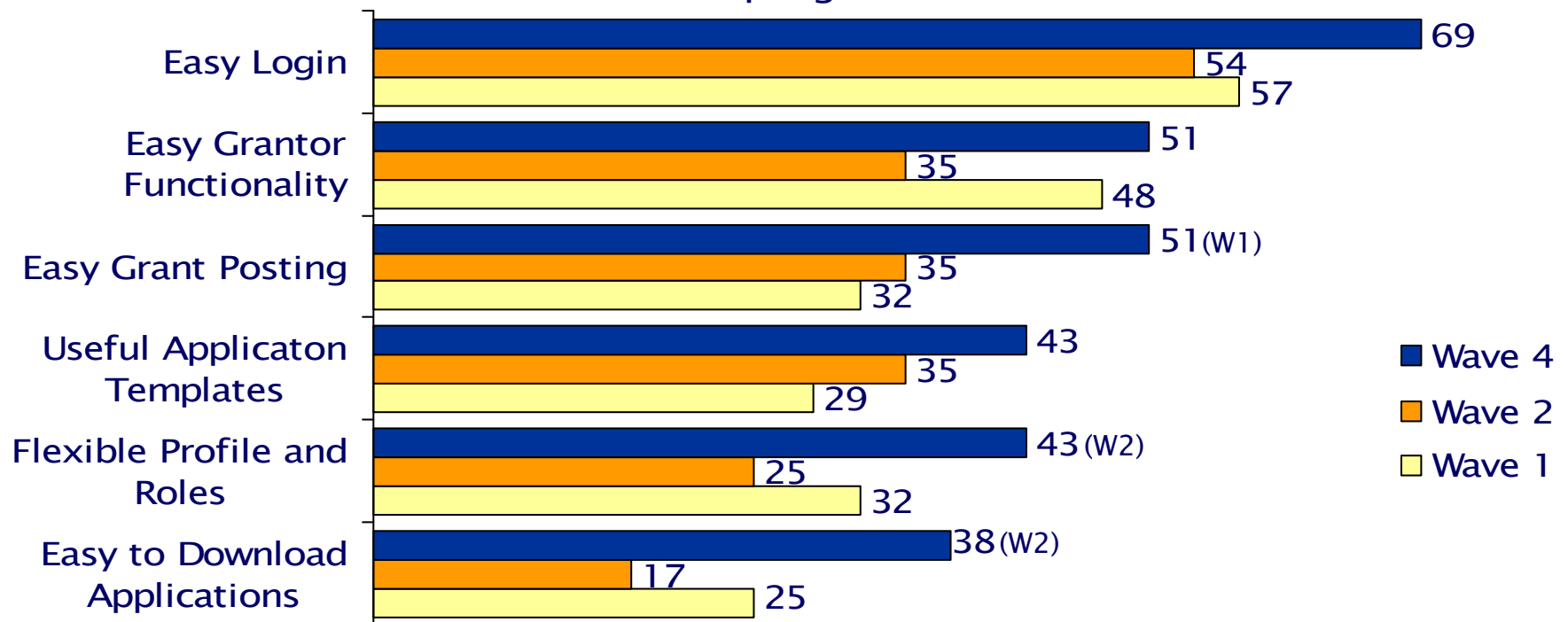
## Strengths and Challenges: Grantor Functionality

### Grantors

- Grantor functionality has improved over the past year in all areas for Grantors. In particular, Grantors feel it is easier to post a grant opportunity, there is more flexibility in the agency profile and user roles, and it is easier to download completed applications.
- Half or more of Grantors believe Grants.gov is easy to login, provides useful Grantor functionality, and has an easy process for posting grant opportunities.

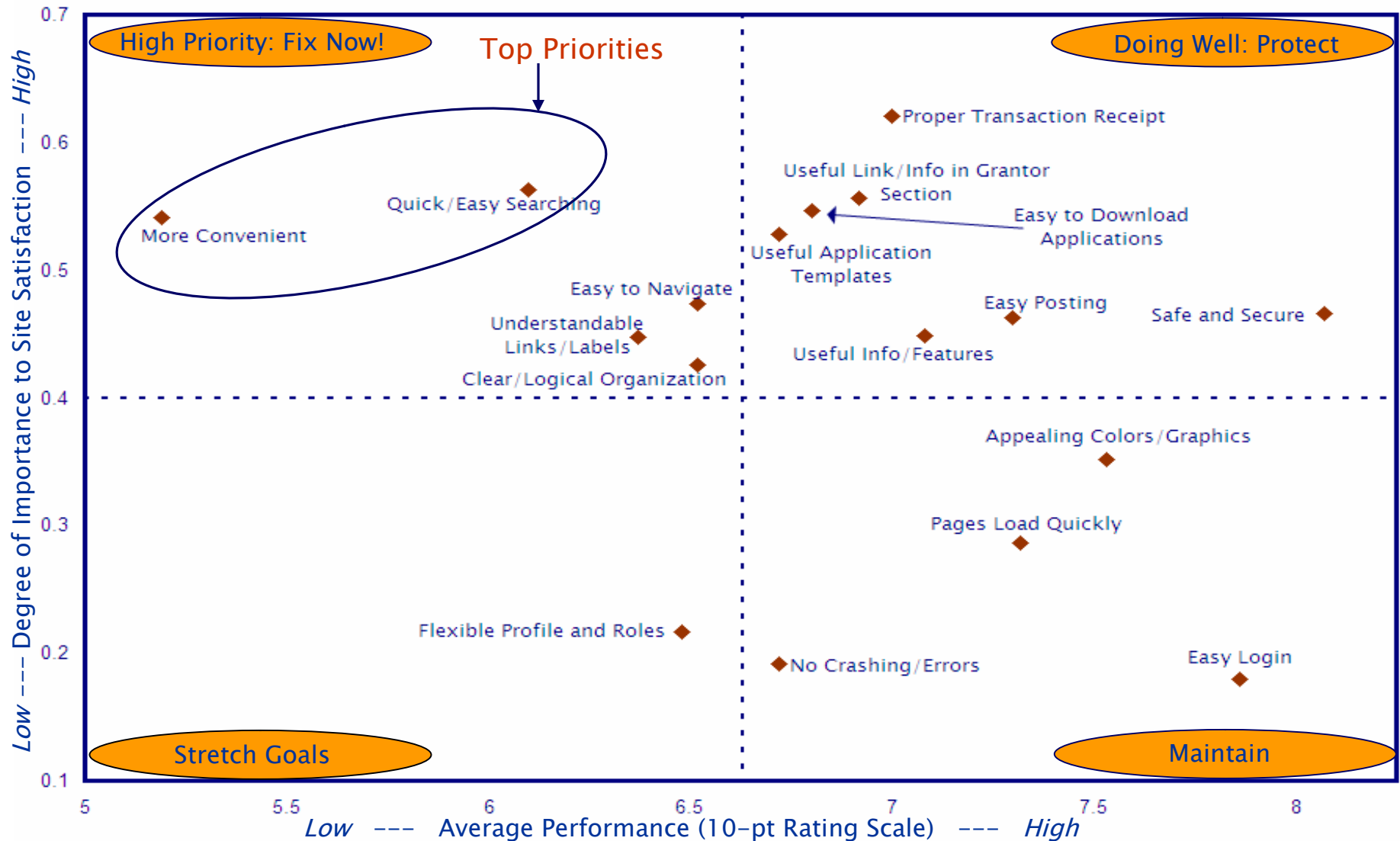
### Strengths and Challenges: Grantor Functionality

– % 8–10 on 10-pt Agreement Scale –



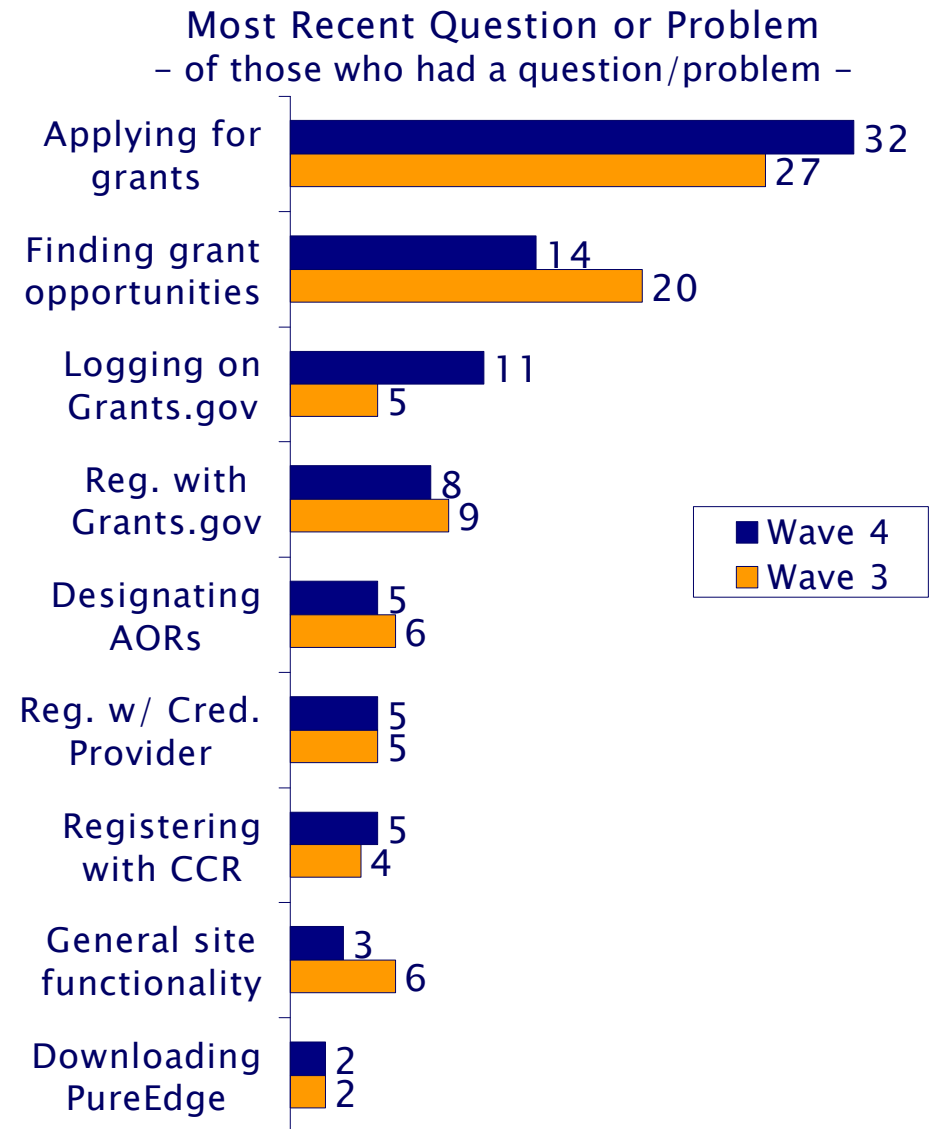
## Grantor Perceptions of Performance

- The graph below considers the individual areas of performance relative to overall satisfaction and helps to prioritize areas that need more attention.
- Priorities for improvement include making it easier to search and more convenient to use.



## Customer Support Needs: Grant Community

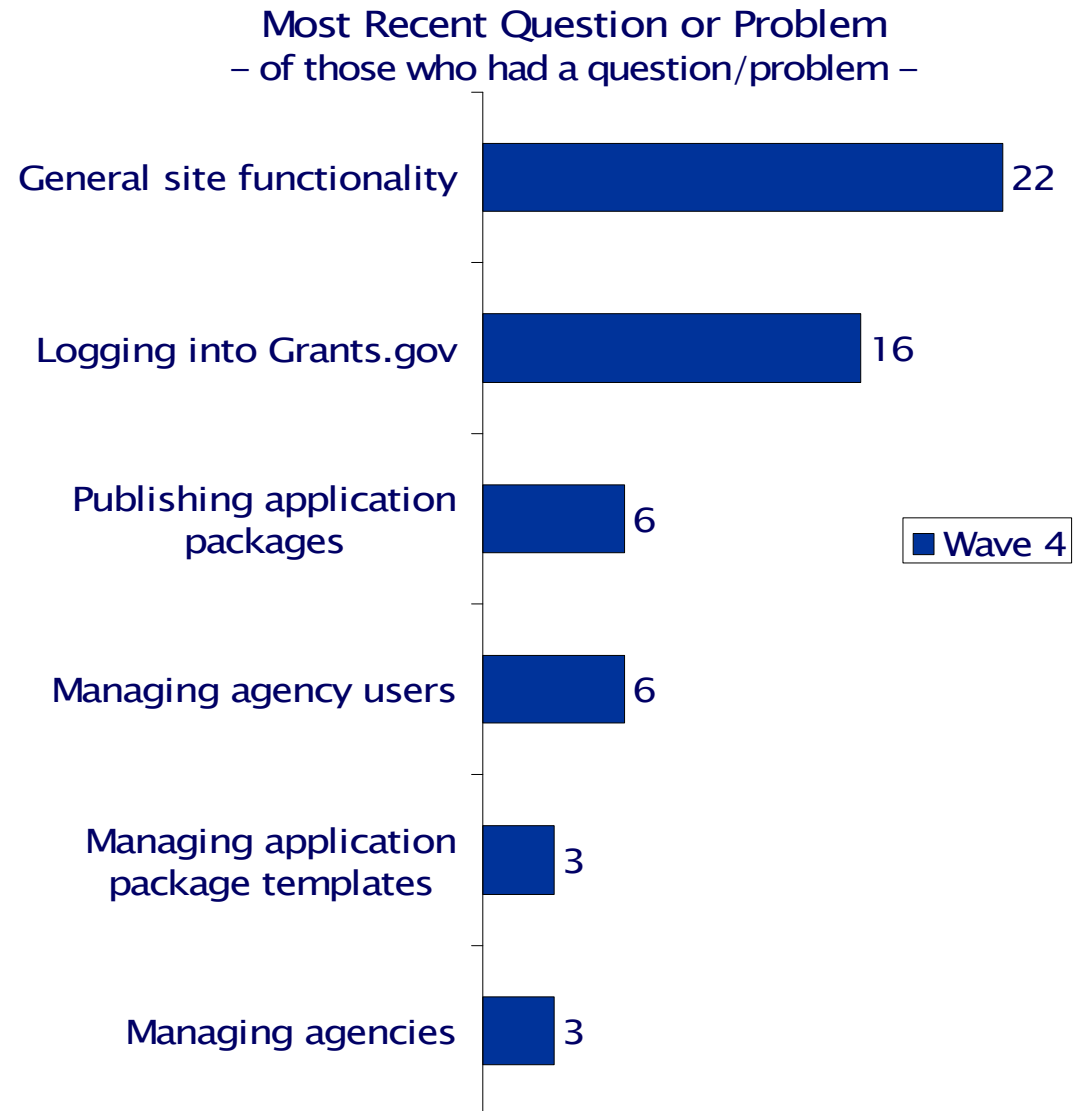
- In Wave 4, 37% of Grant Community members had questions or problems while using Grants.gov.
- The most common issues related to applying for grants or finding grant opportunities on Grants.gov.



*Note: Question was changed to a close-ended question in Wave 3 from an open-ended question in previous waves.*

## Customer Support Needs: Grantors

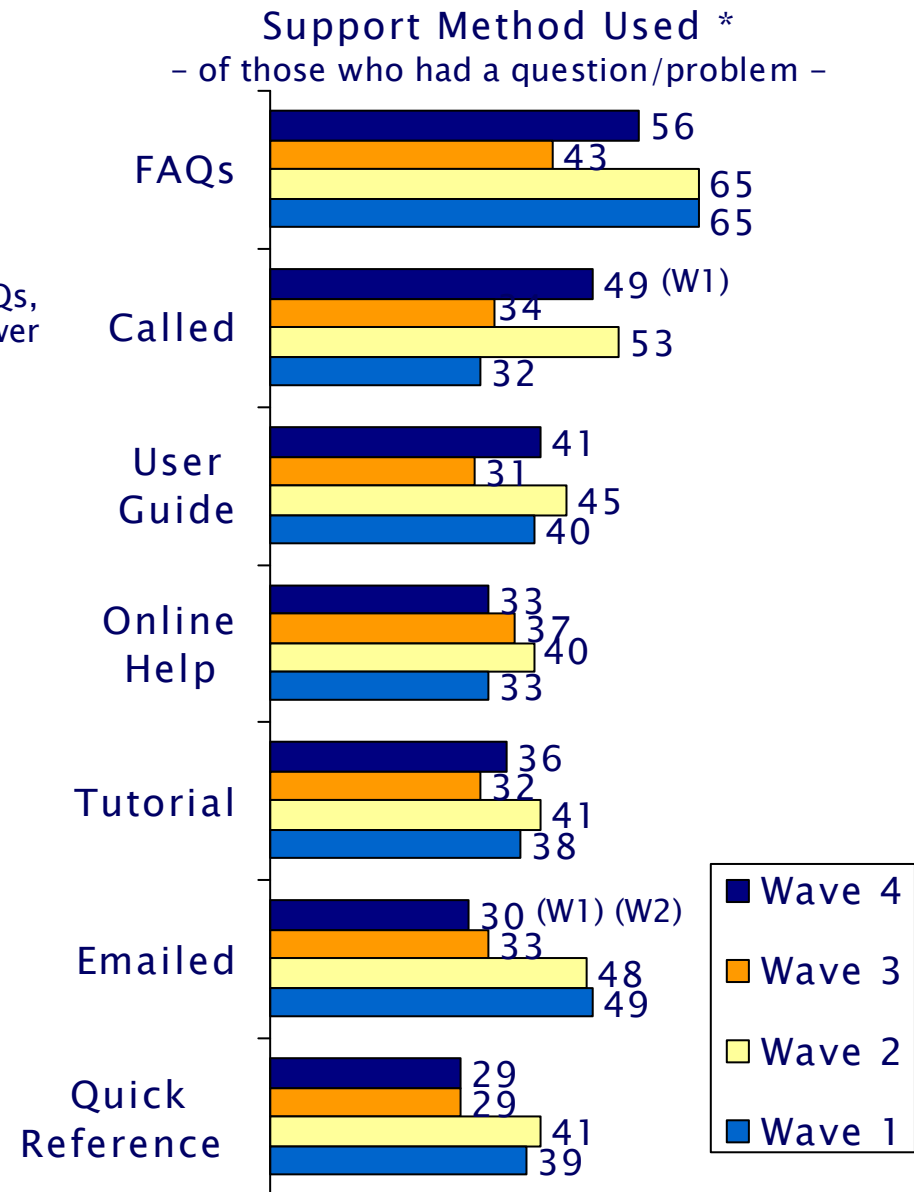
- In Wave 4, 47% of Grantors had questions or problems while using Grants.gov.
- Grantors tend to contact customer support with questions on general site functionality or logging in.



*Note: Question was changed to a close-ended question in Wave 3 from an open-ended question in previous waves.*

## Customer Support Usage: Grant Community

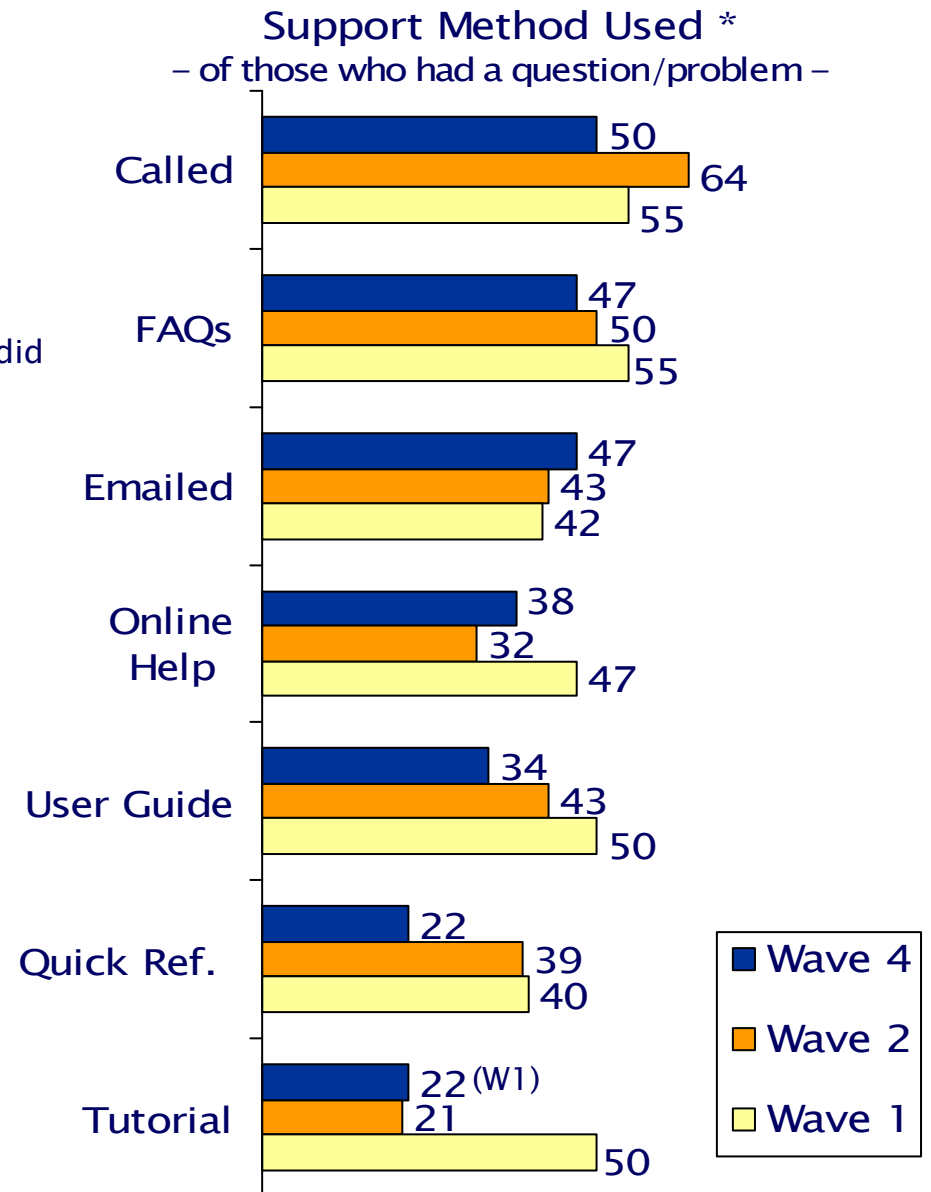
- Usage of particular customer support methods by Grant Community members with questions about Grants.gov has varied over the past year.
- Currently, Grant Community members are using FAQs, calling, and referring to the user guide most to answer their questions.
- In the past year, they are more likely to call and less likely to email customer support.



\* This question changed in Wave 3 to include only customer support methods used for their most recent question/problem.

## Customer Support Usage: Grantors

- Grantors who have questions about Grants.gov continue to call, email, or use the FAQs most to address their problems, and this has not changed much over the past year.
- Grantors continue to use the tutorial less than they did a year ago.

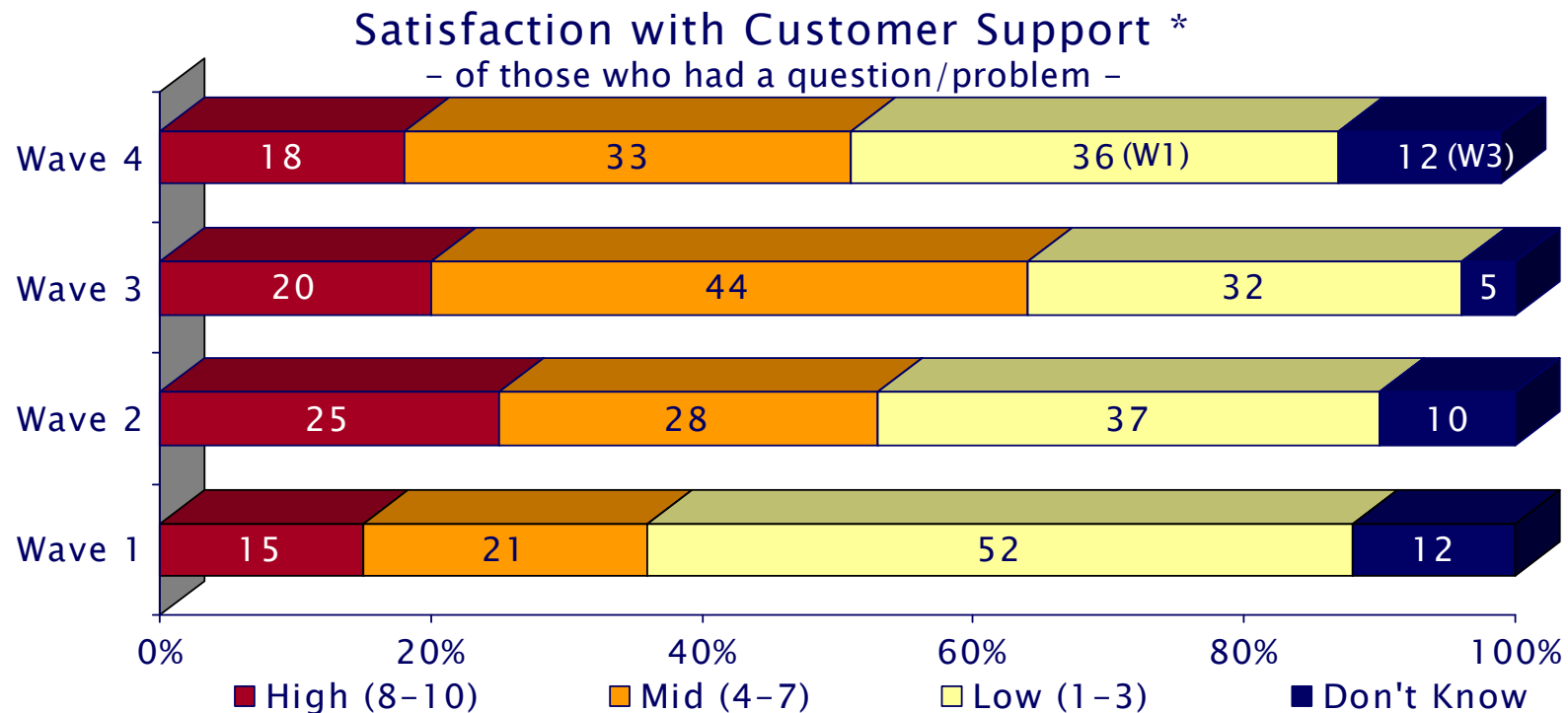


\* This question changed in Wave 3 to include only customer support methods used for their most recent question/problem.



## Satisfaction with Customer Support: Grant Community

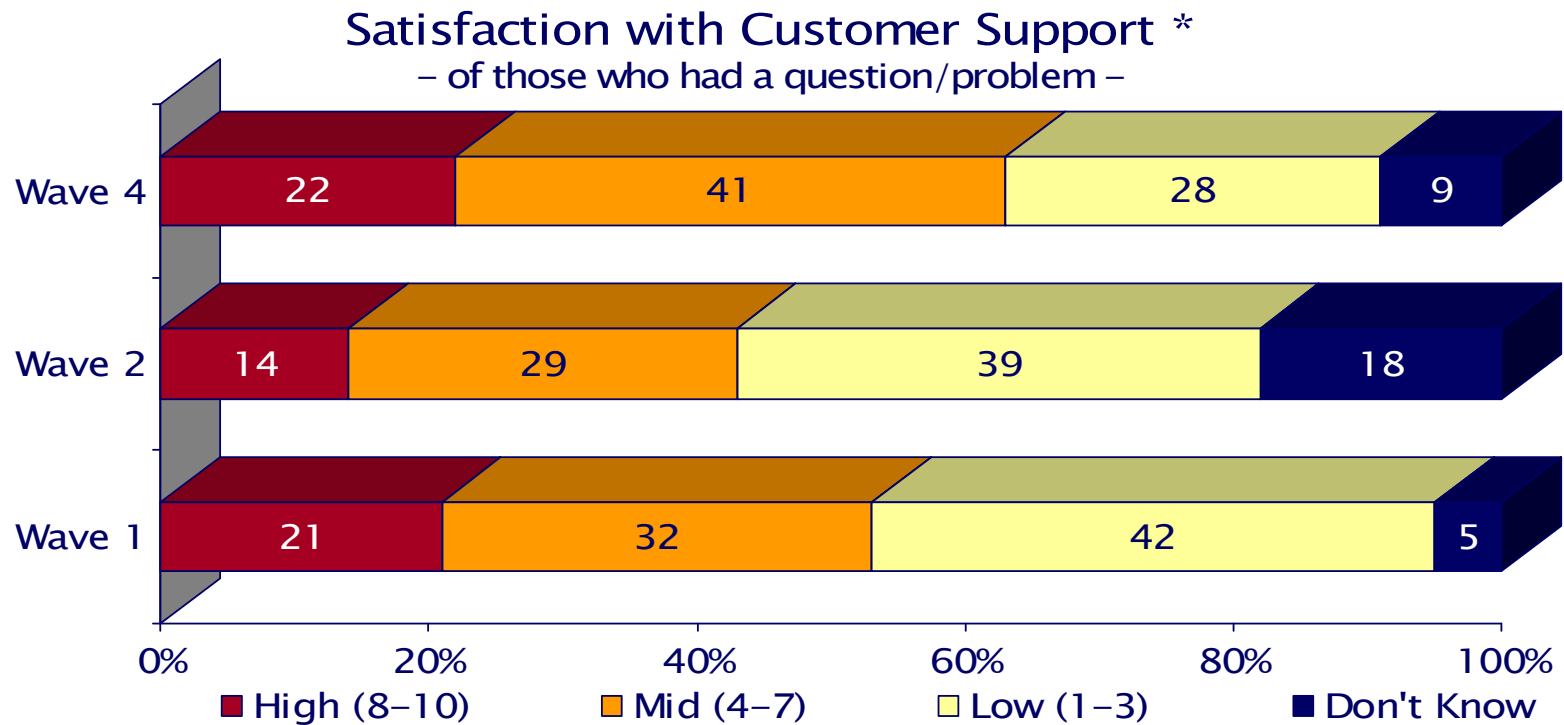
- Satisfaction with customer support has decreased slightly since Wave 3 with half (51%) of Grant Community members at least moderately satisfied in Wave 4 compared to 64% in Wave 3.
- Only four-in-ten (44%) feel their question or problem was fully resolved.
  - However, half (54%) of Grant Community members who emailed or called customer support (contact center) feel that their question or problem was fully resolved.



\* This question changed in Wave 3 to satisfaction with their most recent question/problem.

## Satisfaction with Customer Support: Grantors

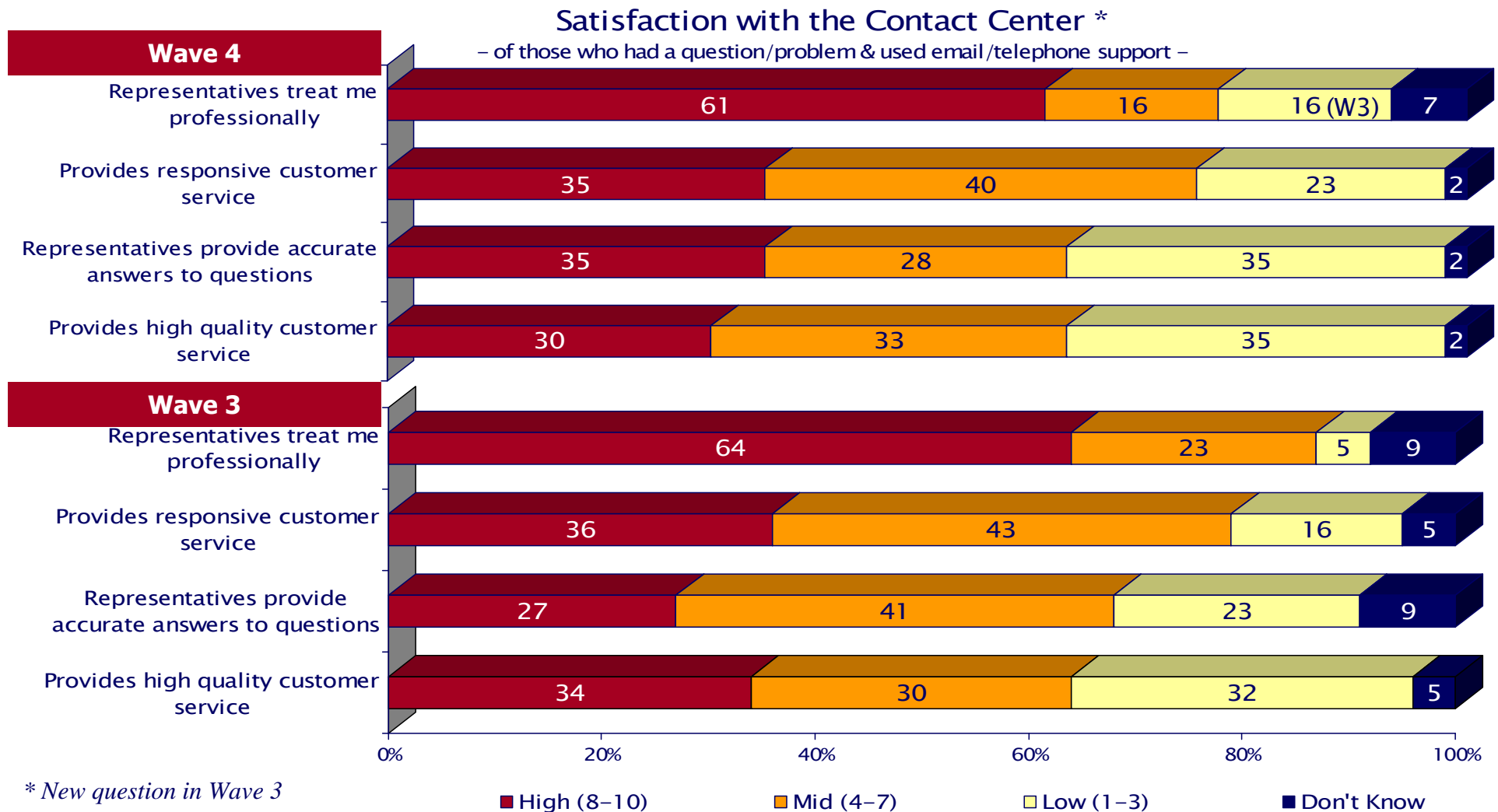
- Grantors' satisfaction with customer support has not changed much over time. A full 63% are at least moderately satisfied.
- Half (50%) feel their question or problem was fully resolved.
  - 54% of Grantors who emailed or called customer support (contact center) feel that their question or problem was fully resolved.



\* This question changed in Wave 3 to satisfaction with their most recent question/problem.

## Satisfaction with the Contact Center: Grant Community

- Grant Community members' satisfaction with customer support's professionalism, responsiveness, accuracy, and overall quality remains steady since Wave 3. They are most satisfied with the professionalism of the customer support staff.



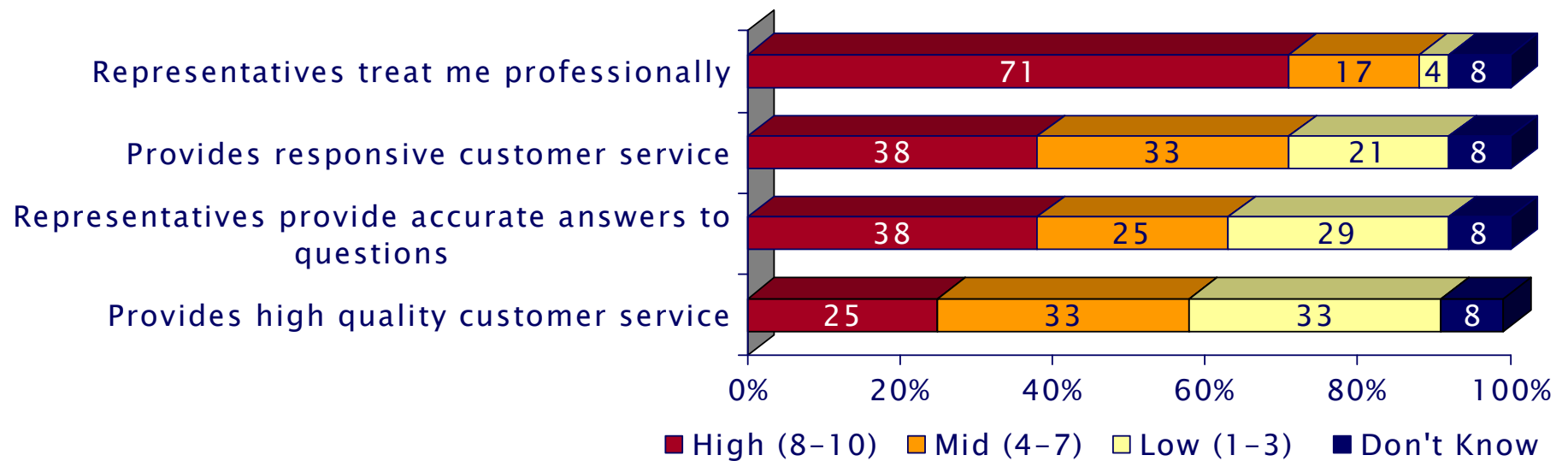
\* New question in Wave 3

## Satisfaction with the Contact Center: Grantors

- A strong majority of Grantors are highly satisfied with the professionalism of the customer support staff.
- Other aspects of customer support are not as satisfactory to Grantors including their responsiveness, accuracy in answers, and overall quality.

### Satisfaction with the Contact Center \*

– of those who had a question/problem & used email/telephone support –

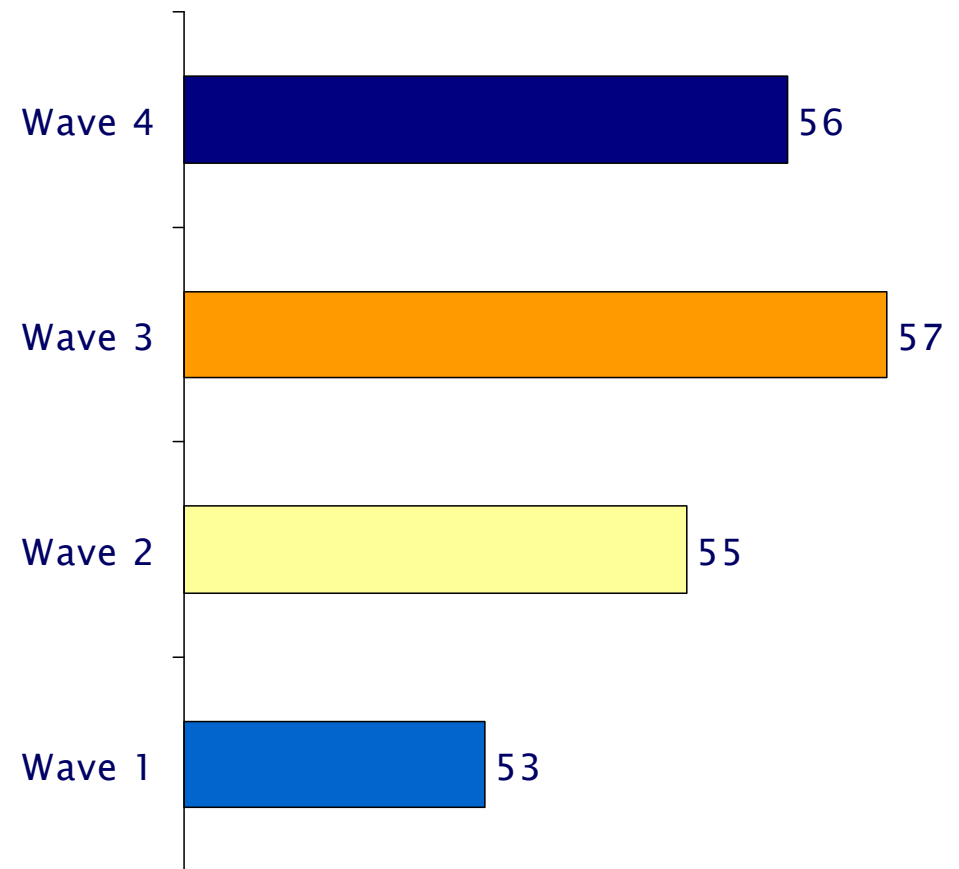


\* New question in Wave 4

## Training and Support on Grants.gov: Grant Community

- About half of Grant Community members claim they received enough training and support to use Grants.gov, and this has not changed over the past year.

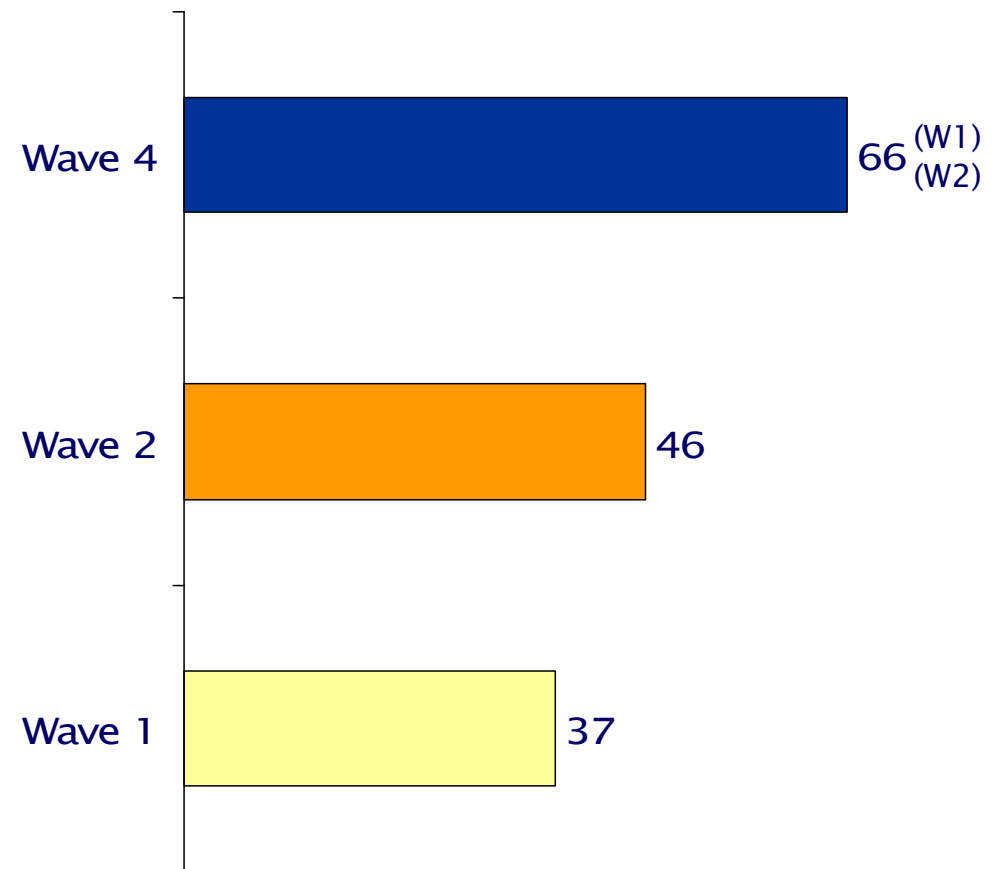
### Grants.gov Training and Support



## Training and Support on Grants.gov: Grantors

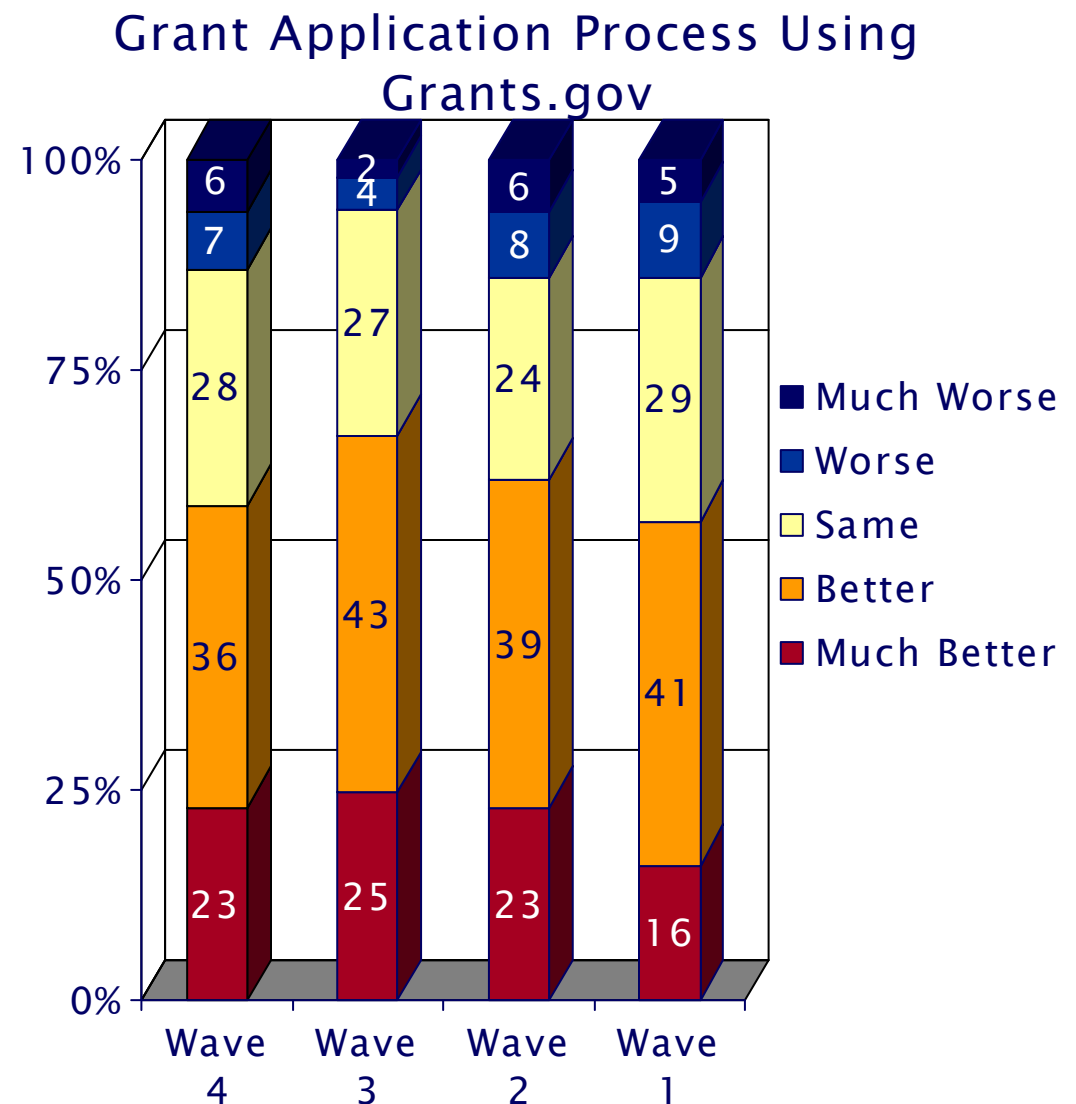
- Two-thirds of Grantors in Wave 4 believe they received enough training and support to use Grants.gov, and this is significantly higher than in previous waves.

### Grants.gov Training and Support



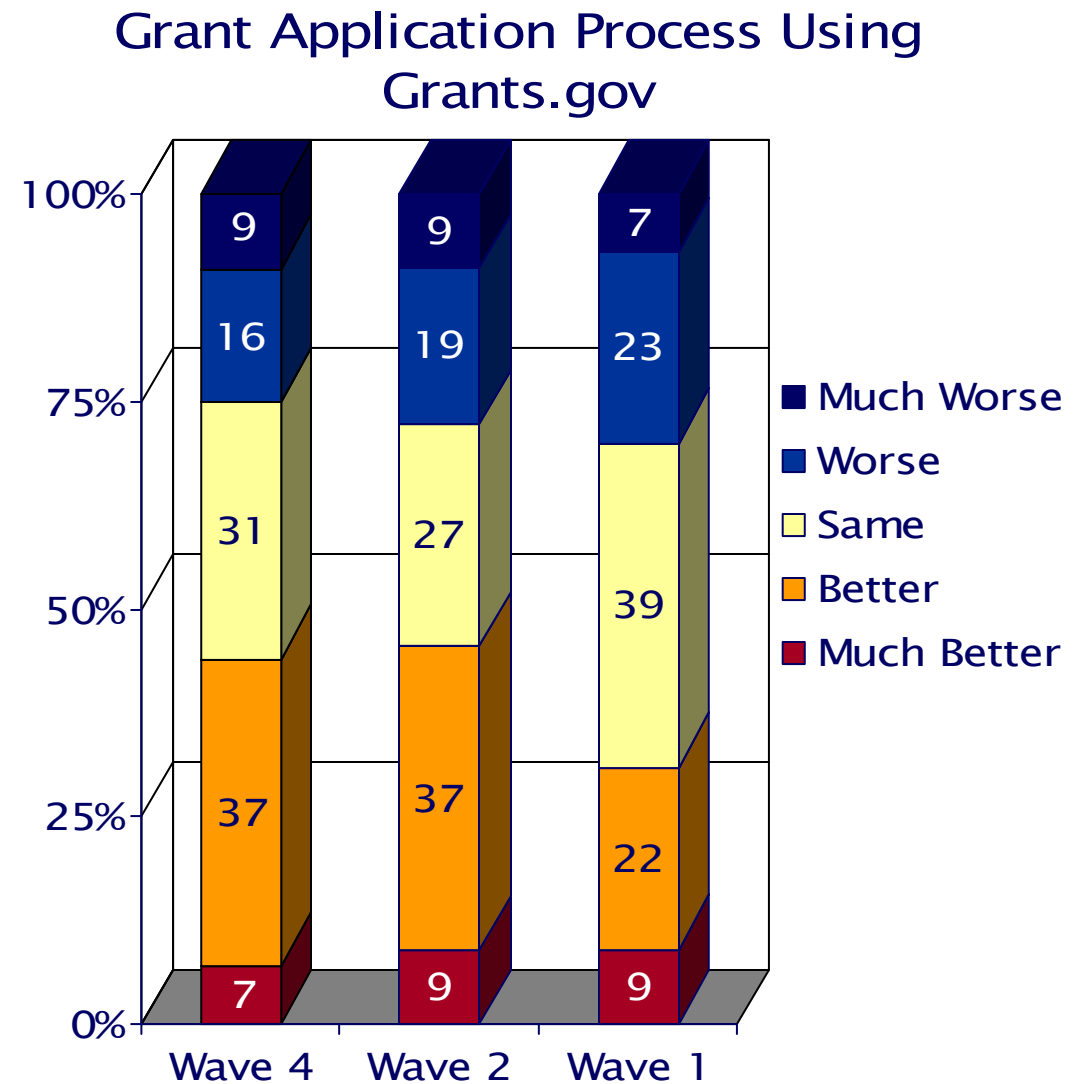
## Effect of Grants.gov on the Grants Process: Grant Community

- Six-in-ten (59%) Grant Community members believe the grant application process is better with Grants.gov, and this has remained steady over the past year.



## Effect of Grants.gov on the Grants Process: Grantors

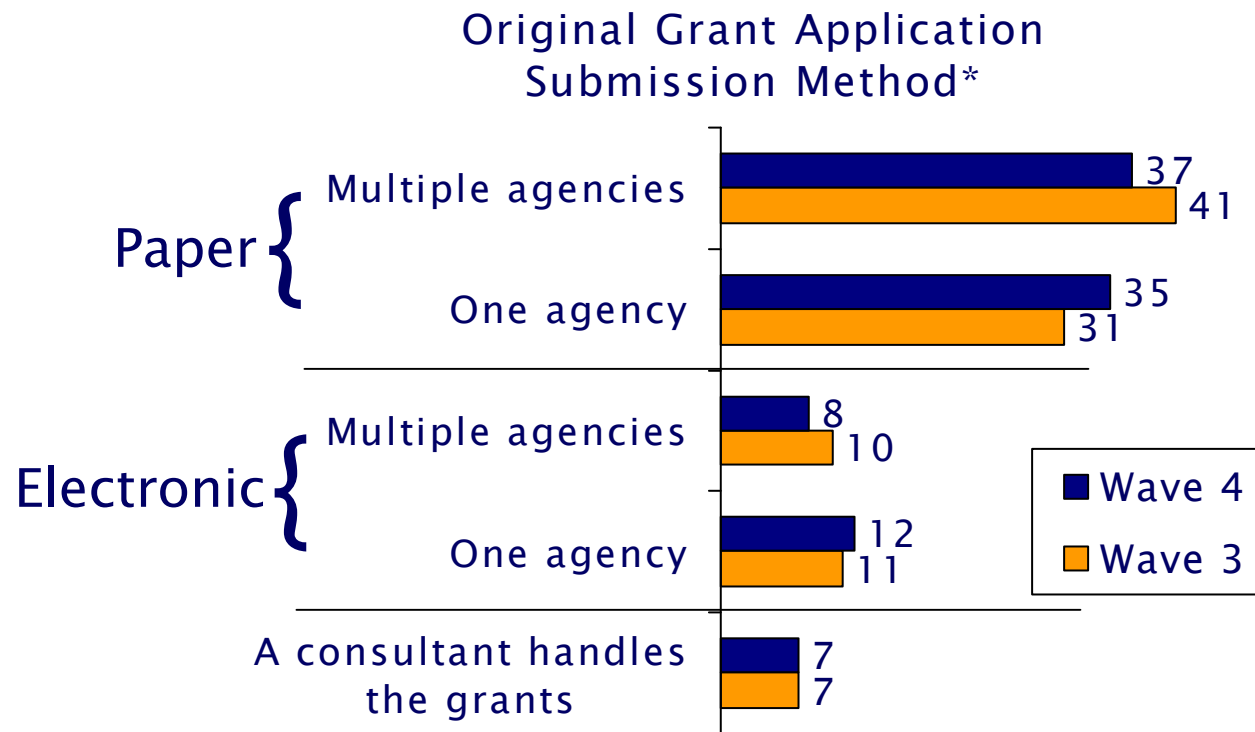
- Four-in-ten (44%) Grantors find that Grants.gov makes the grant application process better, and this has not varied much over the past year.





## Original Grant Submission Process: Grant Community

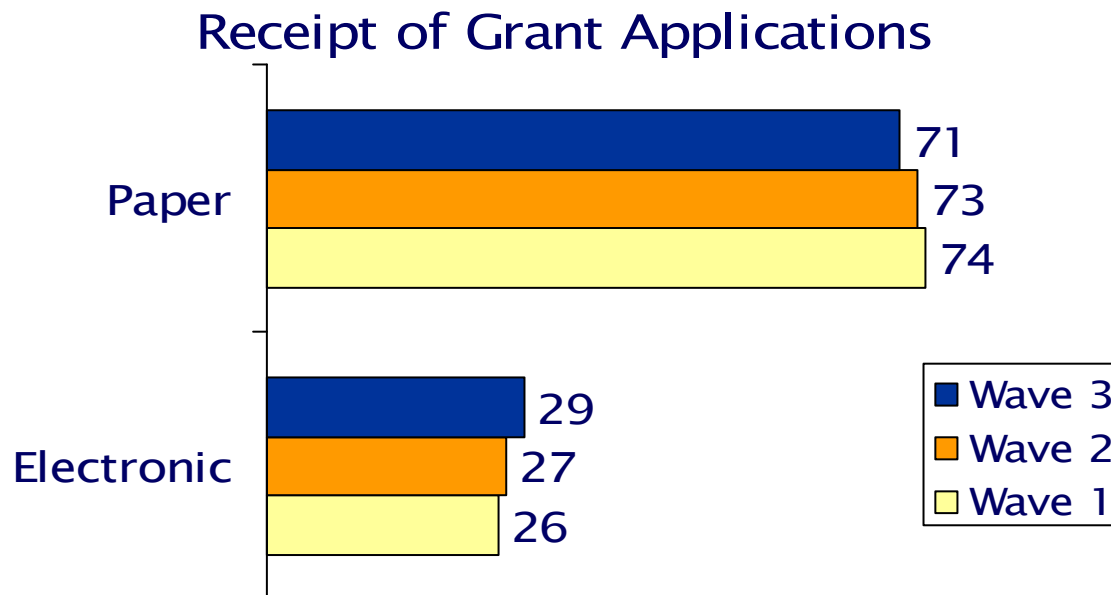
- Similar to Wave 3, the majority of Grant Community members submit most of their grant applications on paper. About half of those who submit by paper send applications to one agency, with the rest submitting to multiple agencies.
- Two-in-ten Grant Community members submit applications electronically, with 7% using a consultant to submit their grant applications.



\* New question in Wave 3

## Original Grant Receipt Process: Grantors

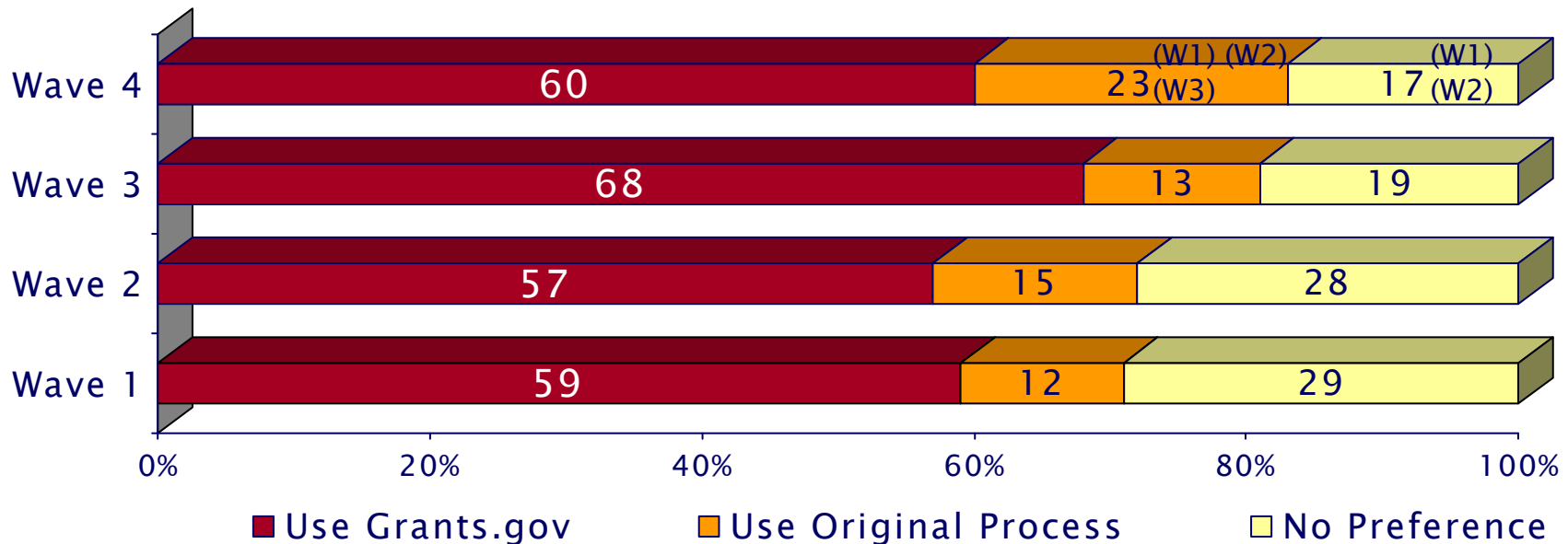
- Seven-in-ten Grantors receive most of their grant applications on paper, which is similar to previous waves.
- 56% of Grantors have an electronic grant application system other than Grants.gov.
  - Systems mentioned by Grantors include e-GRANT (through Carnegie-Mellon University), e-grants/Grant Administration and Payment System, IIPS, e-Application, agency specific systems, CDFI, CREEMS, RDAPS, Federal Management Information System, Fedgrants.gov, Head Start GABI, IAR, ER, eRA, IGMS.



## Preference for Future Usage: Grant Community

- Grant Community members' preference for using Grants.gov over their original grant submission process is down this wave. In Wave 4, almost a quarter of Grant Community members prefer to use their original process instead of Grants.gov, compared to 13% in Wave 3.
- However, a full 60% of Grant Community members prefer to use Grants.gov instead of their original grant submission process.
- Of those Grant Community members who primarily used an electronic process prior to Grants.gov, 64% would still prefer to use Grants.gov.

Preference Between Grants.gov and Original Process



## Preference for Future Usage: Grantors

- Half of Grantors prefer to use Grants.gov over their original process for grant submission. Fewer prefer their original process than in previous waves.
- Of those Grantors members who primarily used an electronic process prior to Grants.gov, only 20% would still prefer to use Grants.gov.

Preference Between Grants.gov and Original Process

